

The constant chairman

The choice of Anthony Rampton, whose chairmanship has just abruptly terminated, to head the committee of inquiry into the education of ethnic minority children, looked at the time like an imaginative step outside the usual travelling grounds for suitable chairpersons. By picking Lord Swann to succeed him in mid-term, the Secretary of State has fallen back again upon the more established ranks of the great and the good, the constant chairman.

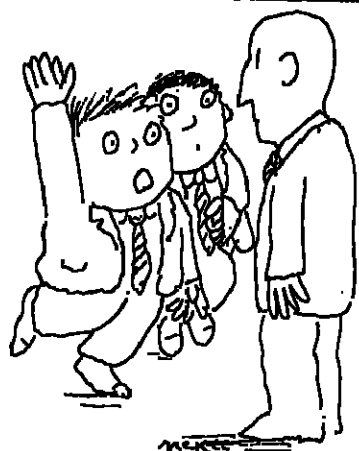
Rampton runs the family firm in Clapham, a mail order business where the staff still know him as Mr Tony. He wasn't particularly familiar with the educational scene when Shirley Williams asked him to chair the committee of inquiry a little over two years ago, though he mugged up a lot of reports very quickly, but he did have first-hand experience of the difficulties facing the West Indian community in Brixton, where he recruited most of his staff.

He became interested not just in their employment but also in their housing, education, and the discrimination that they faced. This interest led him on to the local Community Relations Council, the Runnymede Trust and finally to the chairmanship of the committee of inquiry. He was able to overcome some initial hostility from black groups threatening to boycott his work, and it was ironic that the recent Brixton riots occurred when his interim report was sitting in Mark Carls' in-tray.

Once it had been decided that solid experience as a chairman was more important than sympathy, the former Sir Michael Swann, recently retired from the BBC and with a real zest for bringing disparate people together, must have risen quickly to the top of the list.

Proven mastery at drafting reports was probably another point in his favour. One of the reasons for the reluctance to publish the interim report is its rambling length, which neither Rampton nor his secretariat managed to chop down in order to present a "concentrated guide to urgent action".

True greed
All over Haringey this week, Parent-Teacher Associations have been solemnly presented with a bill for £1-plus 15p insurance - for meeting in their children's schools. It would have been a lot more but for some frenzied activity in the Easter holidays. Just



Break

'We hate NF'

You have to stay cool to keep ahead of the game when it comes to dealing with racial and political extremism in London schools.

One deputy head at an impeccably caring school noticed the letters NF chalked up on a wall as he walked round last week with a sixth-former. "We'll have to get rid of that" he observed mildly.

"But, sir," pointed out the sixth-former reasonably, "you can hardly stop them supporting Nottingham Forest."

Blind justice

Should blindness in itself constitute a valid reason for refusing a student the opportunity to train as a teacher? In France it should not; but a recent case has shown some discrepancy between official policy and practice.

There was no doubt about the proficiency of Geneviève Revellere, a twenty-one-year-old student at a Sorbonne, who wanted to teach music at secondary level. Had she not been blind she would without hindrance have sat for the necessary, competitive certificate of aptitude for secondary education - the CAPES in musical education and choral singing.

Under a government order of 1979, candidates with certain handicaps, including blindness, hoping to enter teaching must go before a national commission of aptitude before taking the CAPES.

This suggested that Mlle Revellere should spend a preliminary trial period in a secondary school under the supervision of a teacher to allow her to get accustomed to the job. This she did and apart from a natural apprehension before taking her first class, both she and the teacher were confident she had done well.

But the commission thought otherwise and turned down her application to sit the CAPES. The reason it gave was that her handicap made her incompetent to teach pupils who were not highly motivated by musical studies.

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Worship box

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Universities face disarray over admissions cuts

by Ngalo Crequr

The whole universities admissions system could be shown into disarray because institutions may have to accept students places which will have to be cut back.

One admissions officer, who asked not to be named, said this week that he feared universities might have to renege on conditional offers, if too many students met the requirements.

Aston University announced this week that it has stopped admitting home undergraduate students after reaching only three-quarters of its admission targets for this year.

The University Grants Committee has told the universities that although it appreciates that most firms and conditional offers of places for 1981-2 will already have been made, they are advised to wait for their 1983-4 target numbers before completing the admission process.

The Aston decision was taken as a direct result of this advice and other universities are considering

whether they should delay making up their minds on outstanding applications.

Many universities have made more conditional offers, (that is, students are confirmed places if they get certain A level grades) than they did last year and acceptances have been at a higher rate.

The clearing system, which gives unplaced students a further opportunity to gain admission, and which comes into effect in August, is also likely to be in disarray this year.

Usually about 10 per cent of all university students are admitted under this process but if universities have overcommitted themselves at worst they will have very few places left to offer and at best they will be applying through "clearing" will be most at risk.

Normally Aston University would expect to make about 1,250 offers of places to new students. It has already made 950 offers, which still stand, but has now suspended its programme. The extra 300 students, roughly spread over all subjects, will be

told that the university is making no more offers but if they wish, their names will be kept on the list should the situation change in July, when UGC intentions are known.

Professor Frederick Crawford, vice-chancellor of Aston said he was "shocked, frustrated and angry that Government policy to reduce support for the universities has induced such uncertainty about Aston's funding that our only prudent option is to suspend the admissions process when it is only three-quarters of the way towards its target."

He said, "... Concerned parents, prospective students and employers throughout the country can only expect fewer opportunities for entry, poorer academic facilities for study, and fewer graduates to help in solving the complex problems of today and tomorrow. It is high time that their voices were heard by Government."

Meanwhile, Aston is trying to recruit extra fee-paying overseas students to help finance its deficit, which could reach the £2 m mark.

Rampton report blames teachers

Teachers must shoulder a large degree of the blame for West Indian children doing badly at school, says the Rampton Committee. The committee's still unpublished interim report also criticizes teacher training colleges and examination boards. Diane Spencer reports.

'Unintentional racism' claim

Negative attitudes among teachers is one of the main reasons why West Indian children do badly at school, says the still unpublished interim report of the Rampton committee investigating the education of children from ethnic minorities.

The report, obtained by *The TES*, also lists racism and an inappropriate curriculum among the main causes.

The 120-page document strongly criticizes teacher training colleges and departments for failing to prepare students for their role in a multicultural society, accuses teachers of "unintentional racism", and patronizing attitudes, and attacks examination boards for their "parochialism".

The committee makes 81 recommendations with most of them not requiring additional costs. Changes in attitudes and priorities are more important, claims the report.

There is no doubt in the committee's mind that West Indian children are underachieving in the education system. Evidence is given from the Department of Education's annual school leaver survey of 1978-9 which reveals that black children pass fewer CSOs and O and A levels than whites and

Asians and fewer go on to higher education.

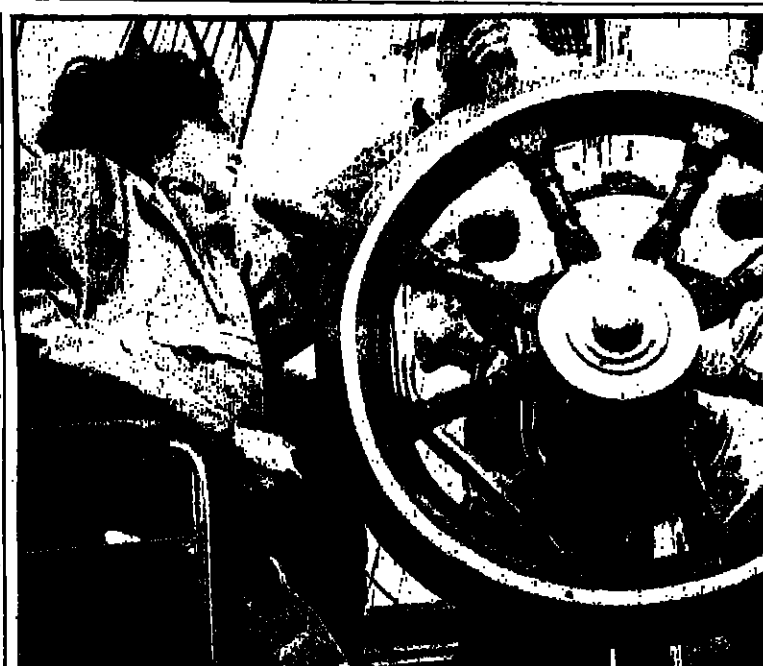
At least 12 members of the Rampton Committee were to resign following the dismissal two weeks ago of their chairman, Mr Anthony Rampton, by Mr Mark Carlsie, the Education Secretary.

Last week Mr Carlsie announced that Mr Rampton had resigned because of pressure of work; but it is clear that he was offered the choice of resigning or being sacked.

Dr Bhikhu Parekh, senior lecturer at Hull University, and a member of the committee said this week: "It took an enormous amount of work with two or three other members to persuade our colleagues to change their minds and hold the committee together."

He was convinced that otherwise it would have meant the end of the committee. Members, besides being angry at the way Mr Rampton was treated, feared the Government would appoint "a party hack" in his place.

Mr Neil Kinnock, Labour education spokesman, has called on Mr Carlsie to give a public explanation of Mr Rampton's resignation. The report is summarized on page 8.



Conditions and pay bodies to merge

by Richard Garner

The Government is likely to announce sweeping changes in the way teachers' pay and conditions of service negotiations are conducted within the next month.

Representatives of teachers' organizations who have been involved in discussions with Mr Mark Carlsie, the Education Secretary and officials from the Department of Education and Science, are convinced the government will go ahead with plans to bring the two issues under the jurisdiction of one new negotiating body.

Until now pay has been solely the province of the Burnham Committee while conditions of service have always been discussed separately in the Council of Local Education Authorities' school teachers' committee.

However, lack of progress on a new contract on hours and conditions prompted the local authorities to ask Mr Carlsie for a change in the existing legislation. The National Union of Teachers has threatened to either boycott the new body if its present overall majority over other teachers' organizations is not preserved, or veto any adverse conditions of service proposals if it is.

If pay and conditions are negotiated in the same forum employers could take off increases in pay for a tighter contract.

This week, the NAHT published its proposals for new negotiating machinery - rejecting any plans to give Mr Carlsie "long-stop" powers over the new body.

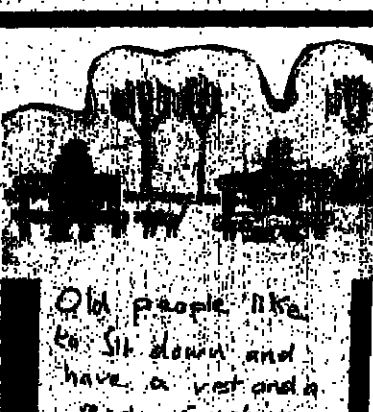
The TES

The price of *The Times Educational Supplement* goes up to 45p today.

This week

Teacher strike threat

Bradford goes for total 16-19 plan



The street that I'd like: competition results

Faery lands by Brian Alderson Page 44

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Personal column

Mary Warnock Divine disgust

A long time ago in a house in Cambridge, a man came shambling unshaven down to breakfast, and opened our first conversation with the words: "Another disgusting practice at Clifton."

As a conversational gambit, it is full of promise: "Let me give you a list of disgusting things." So this week I shall do just that.

Firstly, *The Times* of May 11 reported a women's rights festival in which a seminar was devoted to the proposition "Why the Tories want us to be heterosexual". However, that event, though certainly disgusting if it occurred, hardly merits inclusion in my list because it is second-hand, and must surely be an invention of *The Times* reporter. I insist on giving the organizers of the festival the benefit of the doubt.

As a first-hand example, I can start nearer home. An Oxford undergraduate, when asked why he was so interested in proposed changes in a syllabus, replied: "Of course, I'm interested in what the faculty does, it's being done to me." ("To me," you notice, not "for me" or "with me, in mind.") This reply exemplifies at least two modes of the disgusting. First, it suggests that undergraduates are prisoners, and moreover political prisoners, incarcerated not for any criminal offence, but for their heroic defence of certain opinions not understood, or not approved of, by their captors. According to this view, undergraduates are victims.

Secondly, it suggests that if an undergraduate is taught about a particular period of history, if he is required to write essays about a certain section of philosophical authors, or is asked to familiarize himself with cer-

tain scientific procedures, he is being forced into a mould from which there is no escape, and which will determine his shape, his thoughts and mind for ever. A syllabus is regarded as a method of torture: it can scar you for life. This combination of aggression with a total passivity, the unwilling conclusion of "know-all" academics with a wilful child constitutes the peculiar disgustingness of this specimen.

That is not the only disgusting thing. A powerful candidate for my list was provided in a television interview by Bernard Levin of the conductor Colin Davis. Years ago, Bernard Levin attractively combined rudeness to women, with an occasional revelation of tenderness. Thus, he always used to refer to poor Selwyn Lloyd as Huylake UDC; and to Harold Wilson as Marjorie Bismuth; but from time to time he showed us how deeply he loved Mozart. The balance was appalling. Alas, he has gone all to pieces now. He has done something to him (perhaps confirming the undergraduate's view of the deforming power of education). In this particularly disgusting interview, he asked: "Colin, are you in search?"

He did not ask whether Colin was in

search of anything. The words themselves, fully fitted out with capital letters, suggested that it would be coarse to raise any question about an object. They were uttered as a follower of C. S. Lewis might speak about *The Work*, or a follower of King Arthur about *The Quest*.

Colin Davis played his part in the disgusting episode. "Yes," he said, rather crossly as if he would have liked to mention it first, "Of course I'm in search."

Later, I heard, "Colin, let's talk about Mozart." (Why was the use of the Christian name at the beginning so awful? Perhaps by now I was overly sensitized. If you are feeling sick anything is nauseating.) "Why not?" replied Colin, in his clerical voice. Oh

dear! In these pages, though not by me, is that of referring to education in horticultural metaphors. At the time of the Great Debate, we had a revival of the secret garden of the curriculum. We have not heard so much about that lately. But it is still common to sow seeds, to cultivate tender young plants, to provide the soil in which they can grow, and flourish, to avoid the hot-house atmosphere in which they may be forced on too early, and above all, these days, to prune the dead wood.

The drawback of metaphors, is that they carry their own validity on their face; argument is out of place. Once we have understood the metaphor, the force of the analogy itself carries us along. This is why they seem the most rhetorical, alive, to thought. There is no end to the potential for my conversational list; once we begin to adopt signs of allegory to this kind of linguistic trickery.

Next week

■ The Street that I'd Like:

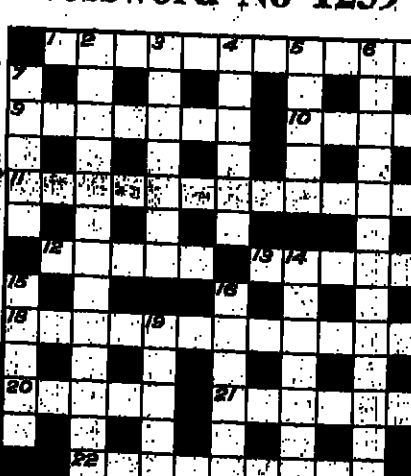
Virginia Makins reports on a competition designed to find out children's thoughts and feelings about their actual or ideal environment.

■ Francis Kellaway on books pub-

lished to coincide with the centenary of the Natural History Museum. If Heron looks at the present state of the Pteron empire? Edward Bicknell views Salman Rushdie's *Midnight Children*.

■ Extra: Resources for Learning

Crossword No 1239



ACROSS

- Do they mark the best of the English? (6, 5)
- Put into home again (7)
- He probably got his horse power (6, 7)
- Tragic end with friends (6, 7)
- Horror that threw you (5)
- Reverend wrapper (5)
- Craft always on quest of course (6, 5)
- Miss Bell was said to reply musically (5)
- Suggest that I changed one back (7)
- Commonly, "it's a break fast" (6, 5)

DOWN

- Period of Moby Dick's travels (1, 5, 2, 1, 7)
- Thruppy for taking in late (10)
- Revolving popular action (6)
- Applicable to the later (10)
- She also serves in royal (1, 2, 7)
- Does this provide an apartment for day dreamer (5)
- He goes on forbidden (10)
- Fludge the son of 12 (7)
- See 7 (5)
- 16 Coleridge (6)
- 27 Sep 8
- 19 Post of conflicting replies (5)

Solutions to Puzzle No 1238

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Motivation

falls with unemployment

Children are beginning to show a "lack of motivation" at school because of the high levels of unemployment, head teachers warned this week.

Mr Ken Dyer, vice-president of the National Association of Head Teachers, said at a meeting of the NHT's conference in Blackpool: "Clearly there is a drop in motivation in the north east probably 70 per cent of school leavers are going into a society that cannot offer them employment."

Mr Dyer's report page 12

It's just not cricket



by Bert Lodge

The climate and the cuts have combined to ensure one of the worst starts ever to the school cricket season.

As well as the washed out wickets local authority cuts in expenditure are affecting the quality of school cricket, according to reports from throughout the country.

Mr Robert Barron, senior official with the Yorkshire and Humberside region of the Sports Council, said this week that one of the results of the cuts was a reluctance by local authorities to employ groundsmen on the site as had been the custom.

A spokesman for the Sports Council for Wales said many schools were able to maintain their cricket only by being helped out by local clubs.

Now that the Rampton Report is available in these pages (page 8), though as yet unpublished by the DES, it is possible to understand some of the reasons for the Secretary of State's disquiet.

This is not in any way to pass judgment on the manner in which Mr Rampton was asked to leave the chairmanship, nor to dismiss the value and rightness of most of the recommendations.

The recommendations do not, on the whole, break new ground of course. Nor is it likely that they would, since the Committee has been inquiring into an area which overlaps with many other fields of disadvantage. This is not the first (and it won't be the last) body to stress the need to coordinate services for the under-fives and over-16s, to provide more sensitive reading and language teaching, to broaden the curriculum, to strengthen parent-school links, and to improve teacher attitudes and practice through sharpened up initial and in-service training. Warnock, Bullock, the HMI, the NFER, the Think Tank and the Schools Council have all gone over some of the same ground.

Indeed, it is only a couple of months since Professor Alan Little's report for the Schools Council listed 60 ways to achieve better multi-ethnic education. The DES has not yet produced the strong lead to action which Little's report called for (along with many of the multi-ethnic organizations), perhaps because it was waiting for Rampton, but it must be said that those 60 recommendations were on the whole more practical, realistic and based on better research, than Rampton's.

Little's report was based on a speedy, two-year project which looked at practice in 94 i.e.s., 525 schools and 22 examination boards. His brief was more specific than Rampton's, which - so far as the interim report was concerned - was "to give early and particular attention to the educational needs and attainments of pupils of West Indian origin and to make interim recommendations as



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Explosive path through an ethnic minefield

soon as possible on action which might be taken in the interests of this group."

What this really meant was "Find out why West Indians are under-achieving and tell us what we can do about it before the lid blows off the pressure groups."

The need to present this interim report within little more than a year has obviously made it extremely difficult to produce the evidence that will answer the main question. DES statistics were hastily collected that confirmed, firmly and shockingly, the widespread fears that West Indian children are falling far behind their contemporaries in examination successes.

What has not been firmly addressed is the reason why.

A number of questions have been set aside for further study in the second stage of the committee's work, which will look at the needs and attainments of all ethnic minority groups, and the need to review them and suggest improvements. Time and again it falls back on anecdote: while it is not possible in the time available to find and

assess the information needed on this or that, "our impression from what we have seen..." suggests an answer, more definite than any which research can support.

The report is written with sympathy and understanding and reflects pretty accurately the viewpoints of the West Indian community. What it largely boils down to is a round-up of the existing evidence, research and anecdotal, explained largely by received judgments and self-fulfilling prophecies.

Since the self-fulfilling prophecies of low expectations are the reasons most often used to explain why West Indian children fail, it is ironic that the report's authors seem to have fallen into the same trap. There could be something self-fulfilling in the West Indian lobby's decision that racism is the cardinal cause for their children's failure to do as well as might be expected; members of the committee (mostly from the same lobby) visited schools and duly came away with the impression that this was so. In doing so they begged the large and interesting question of

But will it be carried through? This is where the real credibility gap remains. It is still uncertain that the forecast redundancies will ever be made. The extreme reluctance of local authorities to sack teachers will be mirrored by a similar reluctance in the universities, reinforced by the well-known legal protection of tenured staff.

The more closely you look at the time-scale for these proposals, the more plausible they look with the full impact - including the first large redundancy payments - being made during what will be recognized as the run-up to the next general election. On the face of it, the Government is in a much stronger position to exact its pound of flesh from the UGC than from the local authorities; its control of the purse-strings is absolute. But this should obscure neither the politics of higher education nor the economics of quinquennial elections.

Easter leavers and the CSE

The surprisingly different rules that govern GCE and CSE exams have until recently been a fairly harmless tradition. Dotty and inexplicable, certainly, but no more than a minor inconvenience to schools and a mild influence on the choices of some pupils. Does it really matter, for example, that there is a lower age limit for CSE entries, but any precocious five-year-old with the right fees can put his name down for ten A levels?

The most significant difference is over the right of early school leavers to return to take their exams in the summer. The new rules on supplementary benefit have suddenly made this crucial.

All exam boards have to meet general requirements laid down by the Department of Education. The GCE boards come off more easily than the CSE ones. Under GCE rules, any pupil can return to school (the head willing) to take any exam. The boards have no interest in the candidate's past education - he or she may have been preparing for the exam for six years or six days. They are only concerned with the candidate's standard of achievement on exam day.

By contrast CSE hopefuls are much more strictly controlled. Easter leavers are not allowed to return to school to sit their exams (though some schools are thought to break this rule). The theory is that everyone should have completed a full CSE course; in practice, means that they have to have been at school for the whole year. The larger element of course work in CSE Mode 2 does restrict schools somewhat, but given a relaxation of the rules, it should be possible to timetable some courses to fit entirely within the winter and spring terms.

In the past many schools were happy that there was formal encouragement to pupils to stay on

until the summer. But as the shortage of jobs began to erode the value of lower grade CSE passes, an increasing number of pupils started leaving at the earliest possible occasion. The change in the dates at which school leavers qualify for supplementary benefit now gives 16-year-olds a strong economic reason to leave at Easter and hang the consequences.

Quite rightly the CSE boards are worried and have started pressing the DES to relax the examination rules now, rather than wait for the grand sorting out that will happen with 16 plus. The DES is certainly aware of all the soothing, and will be watching to see if the fall-off in CSE entries is as dramatic as has been predicted. But any monitoring based solely on the number of withdrawals compared with last year would be an unreliable guide.

Information about the new social security rules has been slow in getting through to some schools. Some heads have felt it their duty actively to tell all the appropriate leavers. Others must have been tempted to keep quiet about it. Many pupils will only have learned of the change after the final date for withdrawal. Though schools may try to recover any lost examination fees from the pupils (or their parents), local authorities will almost certainly be wasting money at a time when few can afford it. In a typical large city, for example, exam fees are equivalent to over half the amount spent on books, stationery and equipment.

The clear implication of the various efforts to rethink the education of 16 to 19-year-olds is that greater flexibility between education, work, and training is essential. More pliable rules for the CSE boards would be a first step. But underlying the question of whether Easter leavers should be allowed to return to take their exams - they certainly should - is whether the social security rules should have been changed in such a way as to penalise those who stay into the summer term. This seems to have introduced a gratuitous disincentive to early leaving. It should be quickly reversed.

Cut and come again

Batsmen with a weakness for poking at the outwinger have had little opportunity to leave it alone this season. Slow bowlers short of a length last season are no nearer finding one this. Wicket-keepers over-respectful of fast bowling have advanced no nearer the stumps; indeed, they have so far stood a good deal further away. Instead, some reports from pavilions of an ever-sharpener proficiency at three-card brag, or in the ability to serve the cut ball back against the cup. Any smell of sweat and lined oil detectable in the air is a lingering from seasons past like the old stud sharks on the changing room.

why the Asians do so much better, but that to that is conveniently left to the commentators.

What is clear now is that more attention directed at specific questions, was needed committee while it was working on its report, and if the resources were not put they should have been firmly and loudly demanded. The committee apparently had been equipped by experience to ask all the right questions, or competent to evaluate this particular field, and some of its members prepared to admit that it was the committee whole which needed sharpening up, replacing. Making a scapegoat of the DES may have obscured this.

What the report also lacks is the synthesizing hand of either a top-level or a chairman more versed in the ways of persuading policy-makers as pressure groups. The report is often notable as lacking in intellectual discipline. It is around, sometimes gratuitously, almost any body, association, political person who has expressed an opinion on committee has been at work. This reflects accurately the reactions of the Indian lobby, but many of the comments would have been better left on paper which seeks to change attitudes as of priority. Some of the opinions about particularly (in spite of frequent comments for the NUT) might have been better antagonize a body of professional people whom the report lays a heavy burden on expect teachers to be so far in front of opinion generally, especially when you are sharp with them?

It is easy to understand Rampton's in such a particularly prickly inquiry. Little has more experience, and his eminent assure the multi-ethnic lobby that they are being fobbed off with someone who has listened to. But time is running out, and sailing won't be much plainer for him.



floor. Never have so many teachers as in the past been left on the hands of the committee.

"There's one spilt spring to scan on the floor. Another season ruled of our life with May will be fine next year as the spring."

But at least Housman had three seasons of the sportsman has only two to start with - the cricket, and the latter vulnerable to other to the heavy downpour.

Washed out by the weather, school sports now threatened by man as well as nature, authorities bring their off-side shows to a halt. One way of cutting spending on sports fields less often. So is cutting down groundsman.

To be honest the game has been under pressure for some years. Weakened like other sports by the diversity now encouraged by sporting choices offered to pupils, cricket quires more time than can be fitted into the timetable.

In a big city like London, it may be perhaps 10 miles from the school, a blighted by being stuck in the school examination term at that. Some schools freely admit they keep the winter term beyond Easter.

But it is the national game, for however it can't be allowed to evaporate from the school or from school timetables and the breath of educational purveyance, it came all the great sporting metaphors of the best known; have to be adapted when the One Great Scorer comes to mark against your name. He'll mark: not the loss or lost - but Did you get a game?

No comment

"Part-time Integrated Science required only a week. Apply direct to the Headmaster of the school." From the appointment book. ILEA Contact, May 8, 1981.

New bye-law gives all staff policing powers in Birmingham's schools

Security tightened after rape of child

by Sandra Hempel

Birmingham council is bringing in new measures against school intruders following the rape of an eight-year-old girl at an Aston school last week.

A stronger bye-law will give all school staff including caretakers the legal right to demand an individual to leave the premises. At present only head teachers are empowered to do this. At the same time local police are working with council lawyers and education

officials on new guidelines aimed at tightening up school security. The advice will be issued to teachers next week.

The girl was waiting to be collected from the doorway of Yew Tree primary school when the rapist dragged her along a corridor and into a lavatory where she was attacked.

Her mother said that she was waiting for her brother to take her home as she

was told to do. "I have always told her never to come out of school but wait inside. What more advice can you give a child?", she said.

"We are desperately hoping that this was a one-off incident," said Mr John Fox, deputy education director "but the half-term holiday has given us a breathing space to look at security in general".

He said there was no implied criticism

of the school involved whose doors, which were close to the road, were normally unlocked only to let pupils in and out at the beginning and end of the school day. There was, however, a problem in trying to reconcile schools wishes to serve the community and remain accessible to parents with the need to keep out intruders, including vandals, Mr Fox said.

NAS/UWT calls strike in Solihull

Disruptive strikes designed to create as much difficulty as possible are to go ahead in Solihull where 15 teachers were expected to receive their redundancy notices today.

The National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers' executive authorized selective strikes at the weekend. They will hit schools where examinations are due to be held.

Mr Ron Cocking, union treasurer, said the strikes had been called to "demonstrate our anger."

Solihull has decided to declare redundancies because it cannot afford to pay the 7½ per cent salary increase negotiated nationally earlier this year. It had budgeted for 6 per cent.

Although only 15 redundancies are now required (originally it was 32), Mr Cocking said it was quite clear that there would be fewer teachers in the borough.

Premature retirement had accounted for most of the authority's demands, he said.

"We will be selective about the schools and the people we take out so as to make it as awkward as possible. Quite clearly there will be some effect on the borough, but we will not allow them to stop us from taking action," he said.

The NAS/UWT has 650 members in the 2,000-strong teacher force in the borough.

The first strike will be on June 10 when all teachers are expected to attend a joint union meeting for half a day. Mr Cocking said the union would pay strike pay.

He said it would cost the authority £180,000 to keep all its staff and pay them the agreed rise. "They have £4.5 million in their contingency funds."

Paid leave to attend rally

The new Labour leadership of the former London Education Authority has confirmed its decision to give teaching and non-teaching staff paid leave to attend the rally at County Hall on Monday in support of the People's March for Jobs - thus extending their half-term holiday by an extra couple of hours at a cost of £4 per person an hour for each person.

At a special subcommittee meeting on Wednesday morning, a motion was passed by four votes to three saying the payment was justifiable expenditure because it was in the interest of the area and residents and good for industrial relations. But a staff circular has gone out to headteachers from the authority reminding them of the staff code and saying no staff should be released if teaching or exam invigilation would be jeopardized.

Rush for passports

More than 200 schools have already applied for block applications for passports to British Sport, the scheme funded last week by Prince Philip on behalf of the Central Council for Physical Recreation.

Each passport costs £3 but for applications from groups of 20 or more the CPCR will refund 50p per passport in the school or organizing group. The passport, available to anyone under 19, enables the holder to sports insurance cover, 30 per cent discount off sports clothing, free admission to county cricket, free deposit account at the National Westminster Bank with the pound matched by one from the bank.



Writer Bernard Ashley (left) and actor Terry Cowling chat with children of Writtle Primary School at the opening of their book fair week. A bookshop, films and plays were among highlights of the week.

Step-by-step abolition of private education outlined in Labour-TUC document

A practical plan for the step-by-step abolition of private education is set out in a joint Labour Party-TUC document which looks certain to form the policy of the next Labour Government.

It proposes an immediate Bill to stop the Conservative Assisted Places Scheme and local authority take-up of places at private schools, followed by longer-term measures to bring all fee-paying to an end within 10 years.

The document, which is a sharper and more detailed version of the "possible plan of action" set out in last year's Labour Party discussion paper, has already been approved by both the Labour and TUC education committees. It goes to Labour's influential home policy committee next Monday, where no opposition is expected.

The crucial moment will come, however, when the plan is considered by the TUC liaison committee towards the end of next month. Policy decisions by this tripartite body, including representatives of the TUC, the Shadow Cabinet and Labour's National Executive Committee, are very likely to be included in Labour's manifesto at the next election. A Labour Party official said confidently this week he anticipated no disagreement on the proposals within the Shadow Cabinet.

Under the plan, a new Labour Government would impose 15 per cent VAT on private school fees in its first

budget. In addition to the Bill halting abolition of private education is set out in a joint Labour Party-TUC document which looks certain to form the policy of the next Labour Government.

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Call for more aids to literacy skills

by David Lister

At least 150,000 unemployed adults in Britain are unable to read adequately, a conference heard yesterday.

But only a fraction - in receiving literacy tuition, Mr Alan Wells, head of the government funded Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit said. "He told the annual conference in London organized by the unit that while basic education provision for unemployed school leavers was not

adequate compared with the plight of the unemployed over 19s.

He said: "If, as we say, only 6 per cent of the two and a half million unemployed lack adequate literacy skills, we need to make provision, largely daytime and largely substantial, for 150,000 adults in the UK."

The provision made at present "palls into insignificance" when considering these statistics, he added.

Curriculum study 'warts and all'

by Biddy Passmore

A report on three years' hard work, "warts and all", on curriculum reappraisal in five local education authorities was published this week by Her Majesty's Inspectorate.

The document, which is a progress report and not a blue-print, shows that thinking afresh about what is taught in schools and the methods, is both difficult and time-consuming. But, once teachers had overcome some initial suspicions about the exercise, many found it helped cooperation with colleagues and gave them a new approach to their own subject.

The study, which was a three-way partnership between HMI, local authority advisers and schools, used the inspectorate's "Curriculum 11-16 Working Papers", commonly known as the "Red Book", as a starting point but the inspectors did not impose any single working method or central notion of the curriculum on schools.

The inquiry began in 1977 after an HMI conference on the curriculum. The five authorities that offered to take part in the subsequent study were Cheshire, Hampshire, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire and Wigan. They selected a total of 41 secondary schools to take part in the scheme, reflecting all types and sizes of comprehensive schools.

Schools started the exercise by considering the three general sections of the Red Book: education from the standpoint of the individual, society and the world of work. The HMI "checklist" of eight areas of experience to be covered in the curriculum was also widely used - the aesthetic and creative, the ethical, the linguistic, the mathematical, the physical, the scientific, the social and political, and the spiritual.

Curriculum 11 to 16: A Review of Progress, HMSO, £2.95.

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Platform

John Bald argues the case for a buyer's guide to examination boards

Publish and be judged

The traditional format of public examinations in English is well-established, easy to operate and hard to defend. On the other hand, the introduction of an alternative often involves teachers in lengthy negotiations with examining boards, followed by an avalanche of paperwork. The dearth of readily-available information complicates matters further and the uncertainty caused by the army of committees, boards, working parties and delegations currently involved in the 16-19 negotiations is the cherry on the cake.

Uncertainty, however, often gives rise to innovation, and some of the recent developments in the field of examination English have been remarkable. Through the activities of schools operating Mode Three syllabuses and in initiatives taken by individual examining boards, the basis of examinations has been broadened and the quality of work produced demonstrably improved. The process of change has, nevertheless, been uneven and sporadic, so that it is very difficult to form a coherent picture of all that has been going on. Full and accurate information is essential if we are to have the full benefit of the progress that has been made when the new examinations are set up.

The course-work produced under the school assessment options of the

Cambridge Syndicate for Local Examinations provides a good starting point. Course-work components account for 50 per cent of the grade in English language, and for sixty per cent in English literature. Once the moderator is satisfied of the integrity of the school, a great deal of freedom is given, and has resulted in work of a range and depth which have not previously been seen at this level.

One fifth-year pupil in a local school wrote an essay on "The Ethics of D. H. Lawrence", based on a reading of six novels. It was closely argued, fifteen pages long, and of a quality more likely to be found in good undergraduate work than at O level. When the school gave this candidate full marks for his course-work, the board wrote to remind them that this should only be done when the work was "the best that could be expected from a 16-year-old". The essay, though outstanding, was by no means unique.

The flexibility of the course-work provision gives both teachers and pupils scope to pursue their own interests in literature without prejudice to their chances of examination success. The conventional syllabus, based on a small number of set books, discourages private reading as it appears to divert attention from the matter in hand. I have even heard an

examiner specifically warn teachers against it. The Cambridge scheme, by contrast, even allows important foreign authors, such as Camus and Kafka, to be studied in translation.

The potential effect of such course-work on the teaching of writing is considerable. Each syllabus now requires the submission of just four pieces of work. This removes much of the pressure associated with writing for examinations, and leaves the pupil free to concentrate on quality and to develop a style. The teacher is also able to direct his help and advice more closely to the particular needs of his pupils than he can when he is working to the same formula for all of them. We still have a lot of work to do in this area, but at least this kind of syllabus doesn't get in the way.

The East Anglian Regional Board for the CSE, on the other hand, required in 1980 no less than 40 pieces of written work in its course-work folder, to count for 40 per cent of the final grade. The regulations state that this is partly to reward perseverance, and express the expectation that most candidates will submit more than the minimum. Moderators have, in consequence, had to cope with an enormous number of short pieces of work, often of low quality, with exercises and even spelling tests included to make up the number.

The experience of several boards suggests that the number of pieces of course-work required is crucial. The East Anglian Board's requirement of 40 pieces of work is essentially a reaction against the low standards associated in the past with undirected "projects". A number of this board's own moderators have, however, suggested that a similar result could be obtained by assessing a smaller representative sample of work. Their view is supported by the successful adoption of a similar approach at O level by the Cambridge, Oxford and Cambridge, and Northern Universities Joint Matriculation Boards.

A disadvantage of course-work as a form of assessment is that poor grades obtained early on may handicap a pupil who has worked hard and made real progress. This can be allowed for in a number of ways - eg, by giving extra weight to later pieces of work - but I know from personal experience that the feeling of having to "carry" poor grades can put a lot of extra strain on people at a time when they are already under heavy pressure. This limitation needs to be set against the established benefits of course-work, and due allowance given to the fact that, if the course is good, the pupils should know substantially more at the end of it than they do at the beginning.

For this reason, among others, the form of the examinations themselves is still an urgent question and one which has not received enough attention. The timely comments of the Cambridge Examinations Board, reported in *The TES* (May 13), that "it is matched a hundred times over in reports from other boards and reflect an unsolved problem. It is paradoxical that the same board should be the first to introduce an 'open book' examination as a standard literature syllabus. In English language, the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board allows the school to set its own examination, and it would be useful to have some of these experimental papers published. Multiple choice examinations in English language seem to me to involve a deliberate attempt to confuse candidates, which is wrong in principle."

The NUJMB appears to be the only board to offer an O level in English language, which does not have an examination at all. This is known as "Alternative D" and is interesting for two reasons. The first is that while at least one comprehension piece must be submitted for moderation, the teacher



is free both to choose the passage and to set the questions. This means that an important topic in the pupils' work, whether in literature or from another area of the curriculum, can be subjected to detailed, and above all useful, scrutiny. It is an approach to comprehension that should be noted and built on. The second point of interest is the NUJMB's acceptance that the success rate on this O level, which is substantially higher than that obtained by candidates using their other alternatives, is based on a correspondingly higher standard of performance. The board is courageous in its refusal to reduce the pass rate, and in this stands as an example to those CSE boards who are said to have statistical considerations in mind when setting the standards for grades.

As the NUJMB adopts a more conventional approach to literature, a number of schools using "Alternative D" have made Mode Three arrangements with the Associated Examining Board. These schools are thus using separate examining boards for English language and English literature. This is absurd, and yet is typical of the present state of our public examinations. An obstructive attitude by a board or an individual chief examiner is likely to ensure that a particular approach which may have proved highly satisfactory in one part of the country is simply not available in another. Schools are generally not free to pick the examinations they wish from any board they

choose, and this means that the alternatives available in any given school are largely a matter of chance. This is professionally unacceptable and must be put right when the new examinations are introduced. The first requirement must be that no successful innovation should be killed off by the refusal of a board to implement it. The East Anglian CSE Board, for example, should not see the hard work it has put into its English examinations go to nothing simply because the London O level Board may not want spoken English to be included in the 16-plus. There should be a board in a position to exclude course-work from "its" area. Once this is done, a syllabus should be available for any school in the country. The DES could help by publishing an annual résumé of all the examination alternatives available in major subjects. Many schools are simply not doing it, and some boards are definitely not. It would be interesting to see what happened in schools were in a position to select their examinations on the basis of full, accurate and up-to-date information. It is hard to see why they are not.

John Bald is Tutor in charge of the Reading and Language Centre, Colchester Institute, Marine Parade, Colchester, Essex.

Drive against racists stepped up

by Diane Spencer

The Anti-Nazi League is stepping up its campaigns to stop right-wing extremists from recruiting school children and spreading propaganda in the classroom.

The group's youth campaign has already distributed 600,000 leaflets in schools and football grounds and is about to launch a magazine for young people called *Yankee* as a rival to the Young National Front's *Bulldog*. It is appealing for funds to help the campaign, which is supported by Labour MPs Neil Kinnock, Tony Benn and Joan Lester, pop groups The Beat and UB40 and trade unionists, Ken Cill of the AUEW and Bill Keys of SOGAT.

At the appeal's launch, Mr Alf Dubs, Labour MP for Battersea South, said extreme right-wing groups had determined the political debate so far: he welcomed the ANL's initiative. Mr Dick North, a teacher in Brixton, south London, and a former executive member of the National Union of Teachers, said: "It is just not enough for teachers to concentrate on what is going on in class; they must counter the misinformation on which racist myths are based." And they must attack racists in their own ranks, he added.

Teachers should ensure that their school has an official anti-racist policy, Mr Amanda Leon, secretary of the South-west Teachers Association said.

One black girl whose parents came here from Grenada, said in her Roman Catholic school in West London she was at the receiving end of racist remarks every day. Her teachers did nothing about it and told her to "laugh it off", she said.



Scenes like this outside schools could be repeated as the Anti-Nazi League promises to step up its campaign among schools.

"My mother wants to go back to the West Indies, but that's just taking the easy way out."

Her friend, a white girl, said in that school you could not cross the playground without someone calling "Paki" or "Nigger". Gary, a reformed NF member, and a

skinhead, who was helping to edit the new magazine, said 11 to 12-year-olds joined the NF or the British movement because they enjoyed fighting. "We just used to hang around the stations waiting for a punch-up - I had two black mates who joined the NF too because they like the fights."

Dhinesh, an Asian boy from Ealing, said things were getting worse. He cannot go to certain football matches because "the Nazis are kicking everyone in". He could not broadcast his membership of the ANL because he would get his home sprayed with swastikas.

Coventry moves towards 16-19 reorganization

by Blaise Passmore

Coventry has become the third major English city - after Manchester and Birmingham - to move towards 16-19 reorganization.

Spurred on by an expected drop of 10,000 in its secondary school population, the city published a consultative document this week setting out a series of options for change. It hopes to produce firm proposals by next February, which may signal the end of the traditional sixth form and a move over to a complete tertiary system.

The document written by chief education officer Mr Robert Aitken sets out the problems the city must tackle: a drop of one-third in secondary school rolls by 1990, small numbers of pupils taking some subjects at A level, and very high unemployment among school leavers - about one in three 16 to 18-year-olds. And it points out that only about half of those who do get jobs receive formal education and training beyond the age of 16.

To ease the fall in secondary school numbers, the education committee has already agreed in principle to reduce

the size of comprehensive schools to between six and eight forms of entry, thus cutting the annual intake to between 180 and 240 pupils. But it recognizes that further steps will be necessary to maintain academic courses in the sixth form.

Options under consideration include cooperative arrangements using the resources of all 21 secondary schools and three further education colleges closing all sixth forms and transferring their work to further education colleges; keeping sixth forms at three or four schools to which pupils could transfer at 16 plus; and closing all sixth forms and setting up one or two academic sixth form colleges.

Trends are probably taking the city towards a comprehensive range of educational opportunities for all up to 19, says the document. The city will have to decide whether these should be full-time for all or a mixture of full and part-time, mixed with employment or work experience and training. They could be provided in existing secondary schools or in tertiary colleges.

Croydon plans for 11-16s

by Sarah Bayliss

A plan to re-organize secondary education into a system of 11 to 16 schools with one fully tertiary college, goes before Croydon Council for final approval today.

A last ditch protest has come from parents and staff of the John Newnham school who claim that a closure proposal has suddenly come "out of the blue" and without consultation. The education committee of this Conservative controlled outer-London borough estimates that pupil numbers will drop by 40 per cent in the next decade and that seven school sites must close.

Under the new scheme, there will be five local centres for those 16 to 19, all under one tertiary management. Section 12 notices will be published immediately if the council rubberstamps the scheme. In the original plans which were distributed for public consultation earlier this year, the John Newnham school in New Addington - currently a 14 to 18 school - was designated as an 11 to 16 school.

Mr Bob Alderman, deputy head of the school said this week there was strong local opposition to the school losing its sixth form.

A total of 236 16-year-olds had applied to transfer to its sixth form this year and more than 100 had to be turned away. The present sixth and seventh years totalled more than 300 pupils.

Mr Alderman said that in the consultation process the school had urged Croydon Council to make it a new sixth form centre. Staff, pupils and parents had rejected the proposal to become an 11 to 16 school.

However at a meeting of the re-organization working party two weeks ago there was a decision to close John Newnham School and instead to spare Overbury School from closure - currently an 11 to 14 school - and to make that the new 11 to 16 school. "We feel we have been sacrificed in a terrible compromise. It was never clear that we had no alternative to becoming an 11 to 16 school," said Mr Alderman.

Campaign aids parents of handicapped

A campaign was launched this week to help parents of severely mentally handicapped children to know their rights on their children's education.

It is thought that at least two-thirds of local education authorities are breaking the law by failing to provide full-time education for mentally handicapped 16-19-year-olds at their parents' request.

MIND, the national association for mental health, the Advisory Centre for Education and the Children's Legal Centre have published a leaflet, "Education to 19 - the right of all mentally handicapped people".

It sets out the law in detail, encourages parents to start planning their children's further education well in advance and describes what to do if the local authority refuses to provide full time education.

It recounts the successful outcome of a campaign by Oxfordshire parents who persuaded their local authority to change its mind about cutting education for mentally handicapped young people beyond the age of 16.

Free copies from MIND, 31 Harley Street, London, W1A 2ED if you send a stamped foolscap envelope.

Swilling row

South Tyneside school dinner ladies failed to see the funny side of a T-shirt slogan sported by some of their pupils and have stirred up enough opposition to get it banned from local stores.

"School meals refresh the parts that other pigswill cannot reach," the shirts read.

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Schools Council wants more information for local parents

'Teachers should be in brochures'

The names of every teacher at a school, and the address of the chairman of governors should be included in school brochures for local parents, the Schools Council suggested this week.

The Schools Council leaflet, "Home-School Communications," is the product of a study of a wide range of school brochures by the council's Parents' Liaison Group.

Its appearance has been timed to coincide with the issue of the Government's own regulations on information for parents, which came into force on Monday.

The most striking difference be-

tween the two lists is the Schools Council's omission of exam results, a central plank of the Government's "Parents Charter" which are still included in the Government's requirements. But the Council lists a great many other things which it thinks parents ought to know and which are not included in the regulations.

These include a list of teachers at the school and the name and address of the chairman of the governors, with an address for contacting the parent representatives. Details of any internal methods of assessment and their frequency should be given, says the

council, and ways in which parents are informed of their child's progress.

And the council wants the school to provide full information about touchy issues such as the costs likely to arise from following certain subjects, and whether pens, pencils and basic equipment are supplied free of charge.

A DES spokesman said Mr Carlisle very much regretted that the Schools Council had sent a document to every school which, by omitting exam results, was found to be misleading as to schools' legal obligations and the rights of parents to information.

New books on black life in South Africa

by Heather Nell

This week saw the launch of a new series of picture books intended to fill a gap in the primary school library. Evans Brothers have produced four strikingly illustrated books about a small African boy named Jafja and his family, their relationships and life in the Bush. Jafja's father, like many South African blacks, is rarely at home as he has to work in the city to support his family. His mother copes with everything, from growing food to settling scraps, and all the relatives and friends get together to celebrate a wedding in the customary fashion.

Hugh Lewin, who wrote the Jafja stories, was brought up in South Africa, the son of missionaries, and spent seven years in prison there for anti-apartheid activities. His intention is to show



British children of all races something of the traditional lifestyle of rural South Africa, while presenting the kind of emotions and experiences that will be recognized by children everywhere.

The series will be reviewed in *The TES* next week. *Jafja, Jafja - My Mother, Jafja - My Father, Jafja - The Wedding*, Evans Brothers £2.50 each.

Survey finds cuts mean more free periods and fewer staff

by Sarah Bayliss

More free periods for pupils and fewer for teachers have been reported by some East Sussex schools in a questionnaire about the effects of spending cuts.

"While teachers' timetables are filled nearly to their physical limits, pupils' timetables are becoming more and more free," says a commentary on the survey, which found some secondary staff teaching to be more than 35 periods a week.

The survey, published last week by the East Sussex Campaign for the Advancement of State Education, also revealed primary school classes with 40 children, widespread book shortages, fewer school trips and less remedial teaching.

Replies were analyzed from 50 primary schools and nine secondary schools in the south coast area around Eastbourne and Lewes, providing a 20 per cent sample of the county's schools. CASE claim that the county has planned to cut £10m from its education budget between 1980 and 1982.

Among the nine secondary schools which replied, all but one said their rolls had increased and yet all had lost teachers. A total of 14 teachers' jobs had been cut from seven schools. In six forms there was more than a ten per cent increase in pupil numbers. Home economics, geology, Latin

and music A level had been dropped in some schools. Latin, music, commerce and motor maintenance at O level or CSE had also disappeared in some cases. Some schools had cut subject time and classes of 20 were common in sixth forms.

Overloaded timetables for teachers meant the job was becoming an endurance test, more exhausting and with less incentive.

In-service training used to be the light at the end of the tunnel. "That light too has now been extinguished," the survey says.

In primary schools the drop in teacher numbers (15 full-time equivalents) outstripped the fall in pupil numbers. In three schools, rolls had risen but they had lost teachers.

Strain on teachers had increased with tighter control on supply staff. They were only sent to schools where a teacher had been absent for more than three days, and they were no longer supplied when a teacher was away on a school trip. One headteacher had to cover for absences and so had to drop remedial work.

In the primaries, parents were now contributing "substantial" funds for books. One school wrote: "As we have very generous parental help we have survived." Another said: "I have called our school a 'DIY' school."

School Prospectuses

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New dole money rules 'cause exodus of pupils in high unemployment areas'

by Richard Garner and Biddy Passmore

Schools in areas of high unemployment are reporting particularly large numbers of pupils leaving to collect unemployment pay rather than staying on to take examinations, say head teachers.

Mr David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said this week that the results of new changes in rules governing unemployment benefit were already being felt in schools and "pupils were leaving in large numbers in high unemployment areas" although this was not so in more affluent areas of the country.

The NAHT has warned the Government that this was likely to happen when the changes were first introduced. They mean that youngsters who stay on to take examinations in the summer term cannot claim unemployment benefit until September - instead of immediately after their examinations had ended. The 13 weeks of delay is costing individual youngsters and their families as much as £150 and the head teachers want the changes rescinded immediately.

Mr Hart said he felt the Government might wait another year before a review but added that it should be condemned if it did. "It is a matter of great concern," he added.

One head teacher, Mr Ken Dyos, from Hilton, Red House School, Sunderland, said nearly twice as many youngsters had left his school this year without taking examinations - 25 per cent as opposed to 13 per cent previously.

"Most of these were taking CSE examinations," he added. Two or three

pupils, however, had been taking more O levels.

The Secondary Heads Association have already launched a survey of schools to discover the extent of the problem.

Addressing the Conservative Women's Conference in London last week, Mr Carlisle appealed to parents and young people of 16 and over, not just for the 16-plus examinations but for at least an extra year of full-time education.

Jobs were difficult to come by, warned his audience. And many of those now considering leaving school would benefit, if not from two years of the sixth form, then at least from an additional year of maturity and vocational education. There were at least 40,000 to 50,000 vacancies in further education colleges, he said.

The Government were monitoring very carefully the outcome of the new rules on school-leavers and unemployment benefit, Mr Carlisle stressed. Under these rules, a child leaving school at Easter and becoming employed could claim benefit, while a child staying on for whole or part of the summer term would not be eligible until the end of the summer holidays. Ministers would want to see if young people were actually being deterred from staying on.

But, he said, parents should encourage their children to take the examinations. Qualifications would be of greater value to the young man throughout life than the extra few months' start at work or on a supplementary benefit.

Mrs Williams defends UGC after Labour attack on cuts

Mrs Shirley Williams, former Education Secretary, has defended the University Grants Committee which was attacked last week by her former colleagues in the Labour Party for failing to fight the cuts.

She said the scale of the rundown in British universities proposed by the Government was "massive and damagingly fast". But, given the Government's insistence on cuts, the UGC was right to distinguish between good departments and poor ones, good and indifferent research. She was giving the annual convocation lecture at the New University of Ulster, Coleraine on Monday.

"Higher education does not exist as an employment agency," she said. "Those who advocate cuts across the board without regard to the quality of the work done are treating higher education as if it was a dying industry."

However, the UGC and DES should not take too conventional a view. Universities and polytechnics which had pioneered sandwich courses and continuing education and cooperated with industry in management training

and new products were pioneers of Britain's industrial future and deserved special treatment, she said.

And the damage could be limited. Some of the "misguided" equipment and sacked teachers' resulting from the cuts could be used to train and retrain thousands of managers and workers.

Labour attack: Labour education spokesmen last week accused the grants committee of abdicating its prerogatives to an independent sub-committee of the Government and the universities.

"It is now simply the execution of punitive cuts in higher education when those cuts signal the end of many universities," said Mr Neil Kinnock, Shadow Education Secretary, and Mr Philip Whitehead, opposition spokesman on higher education.

"The least we would expect from the committee is that it should be as effective in making the case for higher education to a government bent on destruction of our present provision as it is in relaying the Government's ill-considered arithmetic to the universities themselves," they added.

'Act quickly on Brixton grant'

The Government should review its policy on granting money to inner city areas such as Brixton, Mr David Lane, the Commission for Racial Equality's chairman, urged last week.

Speaking at a meeting of the Greater London Tory Reform Group, he said it

was vital that the Government act immediately on any recommendations made by the Scarman inquiry. Failure to do so could only undermine public confidence in the holding of inquiries.

First Mountbatten scholars

The winners of the first two Mountbatten scholarships to enable pupils from maintained schools to attend Atlantic College have been announced. They are Miss Sharon Jenkins from Bishop Fox's School, Taunton, and Mr Nigel Lester from Beauchamp College, Leicester, who were chosen from about 250 applicants. They will start the

college's two-year course leading to the International Baccalaureate in September.

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The Code is used by the Advertising Standards Authority whose job it is to protect the public from unacceptable advertising. (To help us interpret and develop the Code, we have recently carried out research into children's reactions to advertisements.)

Amongst other things, the ASA responds to consumers' complaints, and this briefly is the way the system works. Members of the public can write to us to complain about any advertisement they find unacceptable. If, after investigation, we find the advertisement contravenes the Code, we instruct the advertiser to amend or withdraw the advertisement.

Appendix B Children

- General
- 1.1 Direct appeals or exhortations to buy should not be made to children unless the product advertised is one likely to be of interest to them which they could reasonably be expected to afford for themselves.
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 - 1.4 No advertisement for a commercial product should suggest to children that, if they do not buy it or encourage others to do so, they will be failing in their duty or lacking in loyalty.
 - 1.5 Advertisements addressed to children should make it easy for a child to judge the true size of a product (preferably by showing it in relation to some common object) and should take care to avoid any confusion between the characteristics of real-life articles and toy copies of them.
 - 1.6 Where the results obtainable by the use of a product are shown, these should not exaggerate what is attainable by an ordinary child.
 - 1.7 Advertisements addressed to children should where ever possible give the price of the advertised product.
- Safety
- 2.1 No advertisement, particularly for a collecting scheme, should encourage children to enter strange places or to converse with strangers in an effort to collect coupons, wrappers, labels or the like.
 - 2.2 Children should not appear to be unattended in street scenes unless they are obviously old enough to be responsible for their own safety; should not be shown playing in the road, unless it is clearly shown to be a play-street or other safe area; should not be shown stepping carelessly off the pavement or crossing the road without due care; in busy street scenes should be seen to use the zebra crossings when crossing the road; and should be otherwise seen in general, as pedestrians or cyclists, to behave in accordance with the Highway Code.

- 2.3 Children should not be shown in windows or on television screens or reaching up to shelves.
- 2.4 Small children or reaching up to shelves.
- 2.5 Medicines, should not be shown using parental approval shown using.
- 2.6 Children should not be shown using paraffin, petrol, or other flammable liquids, which could lead to injury.
- 2.7 Children should not be shown using machines (in the context of the Code) to encourage and Welfare.
- 2.8 An open fire always have the scene.

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The Rampton Committee's interim report

The dismissal of Anthony Rampton as chairman of the committee on multi-racial education has focussed attention on the committee's still unpublished interim report. A copy is now with *The TES* and we print below a summary of its findings.

Why failure is skin-deep

Racism in schools and society is the major underlying cause of West Indian children achieving poor educational standards, concludes the as yet unpublished interim report of the Rampton Committee investigating the education of ethnic minority children.

Negative attitudes of teachers and inappropriate curricula are also important factors in underachievement. The unanimous, 120 page report, says there is no doubt that West Indian children are, as a group, failing in our education system, and this is a "matter of deep concern".

As reported last week, the Department of Education's survey of school leavers in six English towns where the majority of West Indians live, showed how poorly black children fared in O, A and CSE exams compared to white and Asian children. In all CSE and O level exams, only 3 per cent of blacks obtained 5 or more higher grades compared with 18 per cent of Asians and 16 per cent of other leavers.

As for higher education, only 1 per cent of West Indians went on to full

time degree courses compared with 5 per cent of Asians and four per cent of other leavers. And 1 per cent of West Indians went on to university compared with 3 per cent each for the other two groups.

These results were obtained from the annual DES school leavers survey of a 10 per cent sample. At the committee's request, six local authorities agreed to provide information on an ethnic basis.

The committee has also commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research to produce a review of recent research on the education of West Indian children. This will be published later in the year.

Apart from written evidence from teacher and community organizations, the committee spent more than 100 days visiting schools in nine local authorities. It also talked to local groups in a series of open meetings in the evenings.

Initially, West Indians were suspicious and cynical about the committee and many teachers were defensive and

The committee of inquiry was set up in March 1979 by Mrs Shirley Williams, then education secretary, following the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration report of 1977 on the West Indian community. This highlighted the schools. It recommended a "high level and independent inquiry into the causes of underachievement of children of West Indian origin." The Government thought the inquiry should include all ethnic minority children and began to set up the committee but the election and the defeat of Labour in May 1979 caused the final choice of members to be made by the new Conservative Government, although Mrs Williams' choice of Mr Anthony Rampton, chairman of Freeman's Mill Order and treasurer of Lambeth Community Relations Council, as chairman was accepted.

doubtful of the need for its work. "Throughout our work we have been conscious of a loss of trust and a wide gulf in understanding between too many West Indian parents and schools," says the report.

The suggestion that teachers were in any way racist aroused strong reaction: "But a profession of half a million must reflect the attitudes of society at large and contain some with racist views, although they are in the minority," claims the report.

The main problem was "unintentional racism". Teachers saw West Indian pupils as problems to be put up with, or at best deserving sympathy. "Such negative and patronizing attitudes cannot lead to a constructive or balanced approach to their education."

Low expectations by teachers could often prove a self fulfilling prophecy. Many teachers felt that black pupils were unlikely to do well academically but expected them to do well in sport, drama or art. This could lead to stereotyping of black children with teachers encouraging pupils into these subjects at the expense of academic ones.

Other teachers were at pains to assert they were "colour blind" and treated all children equally. This approach ignores important differences which may give rise to particular educational needs.

Teachers should be prepared to examine their own attitude and actions and take a stand against racism. "In

short we are asking teachers to play a leading role in seeking to bring about a change in attitudes on the part of society as a whole towards ethnic minority groups."

Underachievement also stems from poor pre-school care and education, says the committee. The 1971 census showed that 68 per cent of married West Indian women went out to work compared with the national average 42 per cent. The percentage of West Indian men employed on night shift was twice that of whites and there were more black one parent families than white ones. Children were often left with unregistered child minders.

A multi-racial approach must be adopted for all children and education should not seek to iron out the differences between cultures. It should draw on the experiences of many cultures that make up our society and thus broaden the cultural horizons of every child.

Some examination boards too showed little understanding or sympathy with the multi-racial approach while they could usefully draw on historical background, visual arts and musical traditions of minority groups to the benefit of all children, says the report.

West Indians seem to be disproportionately represented in CSE streams. The school leaver survey showed 46 per cent of West Indians were entered for CSEs only, compared with a national average of 33 per cent.

by Diane Spencer

The committee says it will be seeking more evidence on this as it is not clear whether it is a matter of low expectations or a consequence of achievement.

"Dialect interference" had also been put forward as a factor, but the committee felt this had been over-emphasized and masked the complex underlying causes of underachievement. But the attitude towards dialect by some teachers could have an important bearing on children's motivation and achievement.

The report suggests a "repechage" approach to dialect which would accept that all languages and dialects play an important part in the child's linguistic repertoire. Teachers should help pupils to understand clearly the differences and similarities between the two language forms and where each should be used.

Teacher training institutions have overwhelmingly failed to prepare teachers for their role in a multi-racial society, claims the report. Only a few institutions give a grounding to students on how to appreciate and understand the cultures of the minorities.

This failure can be blamed on a "well-worn, traditional group of thought, practice and attitudes held by teacher trainers operating outside the experience of college lecturers, absent of guidance on multicultural education from the DES and the sheltered nature of campus life."

However, in-service training presented a more positive picture while advisory service playing a key role, along with head teachers.

The report emphasized the important contribution West Indian teachers can make "not least as role models to encourage black children to consider teaching as a career."

However, the committee says the Indian teachers should play a role in the education system as a whole, not only where there are West Indian pupils.

What the committee most deplored was the total lack of consideration of provision for 16 to 19-year-olds, who were either at college, school, employed, unemployed, on day release on various Youth Opportunities programmes. Different financial support was given to different individuals, ranging from nothing for most school children to £23.50 for those on YOP.

Schools should collect detailed information on the destination of their school leavers to evaluate the success of their careers service. The committee favours collecting statistics as they are "firmly convinced that the absence of ethnically based statistics throughout the education system has contributed to the lack of positive action at both national and local level to identify and seek the remedy to the underachievement of West Indian pupils."

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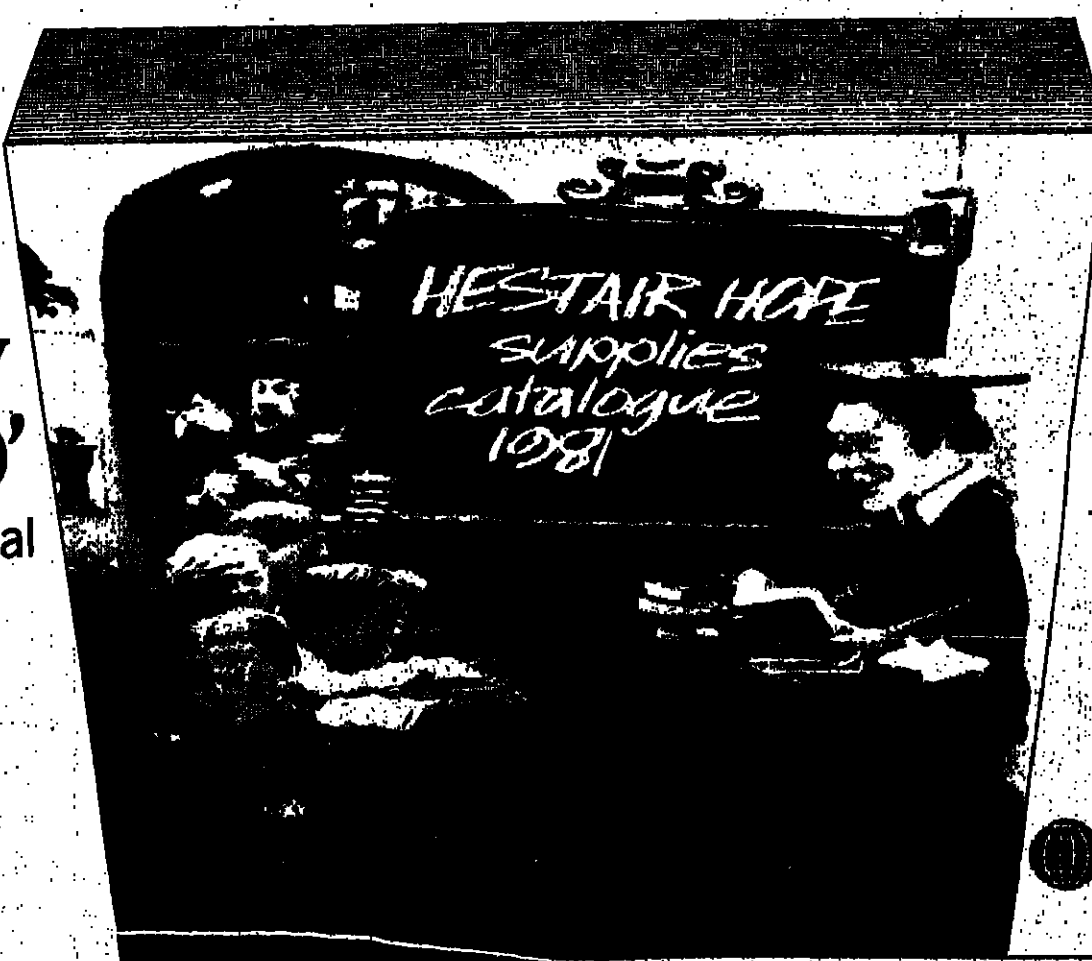
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CSE and O level achievements				
	Asians	West Indians	All others	All maintained school leavers in England
No graded results (includes those not attempting examinations)	19	17	22	14
At least 1 graded result but less than 5 higher grades	53	51	52	56
Total (number)	527	799	4,852	693,840
Destination of school leavers				
University	3	1	3	5
Other further education	18	18	9	14
Employment	54	55	77	74
Unknown	25	18	11	8
Total (number)	527	799	4,852	693,840
Full time FE courses				
Grade	6	2	1	8
A level	6	2	1	8
Any other course	11	16	7	11
No course (including unknown destination)	78	53	58	51
Total (number)	527	799	4,852	693,840

The main recommendations

The Rampton Committee has made 81 recommendations in its interim report, but it emphasizes, most of them do not require additional costs. A re-ordering of priorities and psychological rather than financial changes are needed. Here is a summary of the main recommendations.

Pre-school

All local authorities should appoint an official to co-ordinate services for under-fives.

More West Indians should be recruited as nursery nurses and health visitors. At school rolls fall, L.E.A.s should provide more nursery schools in former primary schools and make more use of Section 11 money, especially as a service for working mothers.

Child-minding registration should be reviewed and guidance given to mothers on their selection and use. Regulating and language.

L.E.A.s and schools should encourage parents to help their children learn to read.

All initial teacher education courses should include an introduction to the West Indian Creole dialect.

In-service training on West Indian language and advice on the "repechage" approach should be available to authorities with large black populations.

Curriculum

The DES should ask all L.E.A.s to define their policy and commitment to multi-cultural education and its practice in their schools.

Heads should involve black teachers more closely in curriculum development.

The School Council should collect and disseminate good practice and materials in multi-cultural education.

Books and teaching materials. Teachers should critically examine text books and materials for their suitability for our multi-cultural society.

L.E.A.s should, resources permitting, be prepared to replace those with "negative cultural bias" in the school and public libraries should stock a balanced range of books reflecting our society.

Examinations. The DES should, in considering future exam framework, take into account the needs of the ethnic minority and this need for a multi-cultural approach throughout education.

All exam boards should review their syllabuses in the light of today's society.

School pastoral arrangements. The DES should issue guidance on maintaining school pupil records and encourage access to them by parents.

In-service courses should be provided to help teachers on the background and needs of ethnic minority children.

Links between schools and the community

One senior teacher should be designated as co-ordinator of school/community links.

L.E.A.s must provide information about their schools, required under the 1980 Education Act, in a form accessible and easily understood by parents from ethnic minority groups.

Schools should provide at least two written reports each academic year on every pupil and ensure that parents understand how well or badly their child is doing.

School governors. L.E.A.s should ensure that ethnic minorities are represented on governing bodies.

Schools should make contacts with supplementary schools in their areas.

L.E.A.s should help to support supplementary schools.

L.E.A.s should watch out for cultural bias in any assessment tests. West Indian parents must be informed of their right of appeal when their child is assessed as having special educational needs as proposed in the new special education bill, and parents should have the right to take another West Indian or an expert to the assessment.

Suspensions and exclusions. The DES should issue guidance to local authorities to tighten up procedures when pupils are suspended or excluded from school.

Disruptive units. The DES should consider the legal position of units serving more than one school and entering full time for disruptive pupils.

Teacher Education

The DES should issue guidance to senior staff in the theory and practice of multi-cultural education.

More West Indian teachers, advisers and officials should be recruited.

The DES should provide mandatory awards for special access courses for

entry to teacher training and other "caring" professions by mature students.

The Advisory Service. All L.E.A.s should designate an adviser to co-ordinate multi-cultural education; and those with substantial ethnic minority populations should appoint a full-time adviser.

Statistics. As from September 1, 1982, schools should record the ethnic composition of the pupil's family with the information when the child goes to school, after discussions with the parents.

The DES should start collecting ethnic information again in its annual statistics and in its school leaver survey.

The DES should ask all teacher training institutions to collect ethnic statistics of all students.

The DES should record and publish statistics on the ethnic origins of teachers already employed by sending service cards to include this information.

Funding

The Home Office, with the DES, should review the workings of Section 11 to make it more useful in helping the ethnic minority community.

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NAHT conference, Blackpool. Richard Garner reports

Warning of three-tier system with 'disastrous' effect on classroom morale

Britain is in danger of having a three-tier education system with a "disastrous" effect on the morale of thousands of teachers and children, Mr Don Blenkinsopp, the new President of the National Association of Head Teachers, said in his address to its annual conference in Blackpool.

Some schools are already raising more money from parents than is being provided by their local education authority for books and equipment, he added.

"Parents are now not just providing the extras for the schools but essentials," he added. "The NAHT spoke out against this practice last year but our opposition apparently has gone unheeded. It has begun and this I utterly deplore."

"The results of such funding if continued for any length of time can only have one result. The present two-tier system of education, private and state, the former in the main only available to those who can afford it, will be replaced by a three-tier system - the private school, the state school with a financially well-endowed catchment area and the 'deprived' state school situated in the less well-endowed environment."

"The result on the morale of the children and the teachers in those 'deprived' schools would be disastrous and the problem of the disadvantaged would increase as the disparity grew," he added.

Mr Blenkinsopp, who is head of a



Mr Blenkinsopp - "parents are providing essentials".

Durham junior school and an executive member of the NAHT from the north-east, went on to warn of the dangers resulting from the "scourge of mass unemployment", adding that in his area "at least two out of three youngsters leave school without a job to go to."

"We have little choice but to educate for leisure, but it is the leisure resulting from enforced unemployment," he continued. "Therefore, it cannot be

said that the recommendation to schools should provide lessons on 'a cynical mind but rather it was the honest attempt to provide an education to suit the needs of the pupils'."

Citing how Mr Mark Carleton, Education Secretary, during his address to the North of England Education conference said that "competition can lead to greater efficiency," Mr Blenkinsopp added that "that is not what I fear for our education service."

"I know I am not alone when I say the Government that we in the school are in danger of having our educational resources reduced to such an extent that educational bankruptcy is becoming a growing possibility," he said.

However, he later added, parents had their part to play as well and "not be allowed to abdicate their responsibilities." "Something must be going seriously wrong when I realise one in every four muggings which took place in London in 1980 was committed by youngsters in the 10 to 16 age group," he added.

"Morality seems surely to have gone out of the window and that is just an indication of the problem facing our schools. I go grimly along with those who advocate a greater degree of parental involvement in retraining reaped from children following offences committed by them."

'Five-year pay cycle will cut living standards'

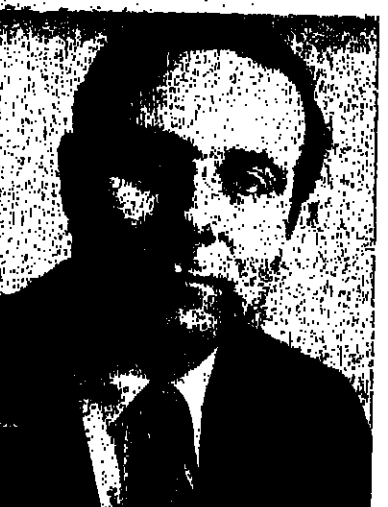
Teachers face a five-year cycle of pay settlements which will cut their living standards, Mr David Hart, general secretary of the Association, told the conference.

Mr Hart warned delegates: "If we lurch towards this cycle, which damages the living standards of teachers or sets them back in terms of comparability, followed by periodic catching-up exercises, we will face the inevitable consequences."

"There will be industrial action which will be the cry of those who despair at finding any solution to the grossly unsatisfactory cycle of teachers' salary negotiations. This will, in turn, be followed by a national attack on teachers' alleged lack of professionalism usually by those who have spent the previous five years holding down teachers' remuneration to a level where they become demonstrably underpaid."

The NAHT cut in living standards was inevitable, Mr Hart said, "unless some civilised and sensible method of measuring the appropriate level of teachers' pay can be agreed."

The NAHT recognised an employee's right to withdraw his or her labour, he added. It, however, would reject "the easy road of mindless



Mr Hart - 'Industrial action cry of despair'.

militancy and the equally senseless attitude of not so masterly inactivity, both of which have been exhibited in full measure by various teachers' organisations in recent years," Mr Hart added.

Heads, he said, must speak with a united voice in protecting their interests at a time when schools were facing amalgamation, reorganisation or closure. "We must constantly strive to ensure that all heads eventually belong to this association which would, at a stroke, remove any conceivable excuse there may be for unofficial associations to exist."

Mr Hart attacked the "deplorable" attitude of some local education authorities towards safeguarding the status of heads in such positions, saying: "It is hardly surprising that heads become cynical when they see that their local education authority is actually forcing them to compete for their own jobs."

He also criticized local education authorities for their "lack of support for headteachers who attempted to weed out incompetent teachers."

"It must be recognized that the poor teacher can do quite irreparable damage to the education of pupils and that any I.e.A., which fails to provide an agreed procedure for cases of this nature or fails to support heads and their colleagues in implementing these procedures, is failing in its duty to the parents of children in those schools," he added.

'Give college rights to teenage workers'

Youngsters between 16 and 19 should have the right to spend a day every week in further education if they are employed, according to a policy document published by the National and Local Government Officers' Association last week.

The document, "Post-School Education", which has been prepared for the union's annual conference next month, calls for "the statutory duty to train staffs which exists in some nationalized industries to be extended to cover all employers."

In addition, the document calls for a more flexible approach to 16-19 education which would allow special courses to be set up to meet the needs of the young unemployed who "may not have the academic background normally expected of further education students."

Gymnastics falls on the mat

Student physical education teachers are spending many hours of their course on an activity which hardly exists in schools, a senior trainer of PE students claimed this week.

Writing in the May issue of *Action*, the journal of the Physical Education Association, Mr Harry Mawdsley, head of PE at Grove and Allenger college of higher education, says that gymnastics has always occupied a significant place in the preparation of physical education teachers.

"This emphasis on gymnastics in the colleges, however, would appear to have had little or no effect on the work in schools. Evidence provided by college applicants at interview, from students themselves and from experience on teaching practice suggests that there is very little gymnastics being taught in our secondary schools at present."

Some students intending to specialise

in PE arrive in college with no experience of gymnastics, according to Mr Mawdsley.

This means the college course has to start at an introductory level with the eventual level of attainment not very high.

The expansion of facilities in comprehensive schools is partly responsible, Mr Mawdsley says. Use of sports halls, swimming pools and squash courts has led to a shift of emphasis from what was possible in the old gymnasium to sports hall activities such as basketball, volleyball, badminton, squash and five-a-side soccer.

Further, having had the importance of gymnastics stressed in college, students go out on teaching practice and find they are not required to teach the activity. "At this stage students start to question the credibility of the college course."

Virginia Makins on a unique in-service/research scheme

Classroom field studies

"The trouble with discussing the aims of primary education", said Mr Mike Clarke, Leicestershire primary teacher, "is that you're frightened of being misunderstood if you get too specific. So you stay on a high level of generality."

The Leicestershire Classroom Research In-service Training Scheme's Research Consultative Group was having one of its regular meetings. It was an unusual one, and the natives were getting restless.

They were discussing three general propositions about the goals, processes and politics of primary education when they wanted to be studying real work that children and teachers had done.

Looking closely both at children's work - and how to approach it when encouraged to follow their own interests and investigations - is what this in-service scheme is mainly about.

It started when Mr Michael Armstrong, a secondary teacher, proposed that Leicestershire should second him to work alongside a primary teacher, both helping to teach and keeping detailed field notes about what and how children learn. Leicestershire agreed. One result was Armstrong's book, *Closely Observed Children* (reviewed in *The TES*, February 13).

Last year the teacher he had worked with, Mr Stephen Rowland, did similar

work in another primary school. And now the scheme has expanded into an in-service project which one head described as "one of the healthiest things I've seen in my career."

Leicestershire has seconded three more teacher-researchers this year, two working in a secondary school and one in a primary. Mr Rowland has been seconded for three more years, to co-ordinate the project.

The four of them meet every week to discuss the researchers' field notes about children's work. The "host" teachers are also closely involved, adding their own observations and comments.

A larger consultative group of 26 teachers (two-thirds of them primary) and nine others meets four times a year. Two or three members present work children have done, for discussion and analysis.

For example at this month's meeting, Mrs Enid Young, who recently became head of a village school, described the mixed results of trying to move a class

of seven to eleven-year-olds quickly from a highly individual and structured curriculum to one where children became much more involved in planning and organizing their own work.

The discussion was backed by a great many actual bits of work the children had done - stories, paintings, projects. Another group discussed a set of paintings by a pre-school child, and how adults had influenced them. A third group considered the implications of two very different sets of paintings by one child, one done at home and the other at school.

Leicestershire backs the scheme by seconding four teachers a year - three researchers and the co-ordinator. On present plans the scheme should continue for two more years, with six more teachers doing research. The county can recoup most of the cost from central government, since all the seconded teachers are studying for higher degrees at the Leicester University School of Education.

The relations with the university seem the only edgy part of the scheme. Professor Gerald Bernbaum, director of the school of education, says that fitting the enterprise with "the canons of research degrees" can be difficult.

So far the seconded teachers have met the university's demands for MEd and PhD students. They have been good honours graduates with academically acceptable research interests. Professor Bernbaum believes that any future work must also be "valid in terms of other academic work on classroom interaction."

So, he is pleased that one of next year's candidates for secondment wants to study secondary science. Mr John Crooks, a science teacher who works in an interdisciplinary team at Countesthorpe College, intends to research his hunch that students are more likely to use scientific method in humanities work than in science.

But in terms of in-service professional development, it may be just as valuable for teachers to cover much the same ground as previous researchers,

especially when they are sharing their discoveries and observations with other practitioners.

Certainly, the level of talk and analysis at this month's meeting of the group seemed both practical and penetrating. One group was discussing the relative importance of content - what children learn, and process - how they tackle the learning.

They concluded that it is only when teachers are themselves confident about content that they can feel safe in focusing more on process. "Some people swim about in maths, and know they can judge the quality of work and cover appropriate content when children are working in a free and autonomous way. I can do it in language - but not in maths," said one.

The project is designed to investigate children learning when teachers run a fairly "open" curriculum. There was some discussion whether it would be possible to apply the techniques in the more structured and set periods of many primaries and almost all secondary schools.

But one teacher suggested that it would be well worth trying to adapt the method to more formal classrooms, so that detailed comparisons could be made between children's achievement and behaviour under different educational approaches.

Unions' study centre plan under attack

A £3m plan to set up a new national centre for trade union studies has been criticized by the leader of the biggest teachers' union.

Mr Fred Jarvis, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said he questioned whether the plan - at its current cost - gave the best value for money.

The general council of the TUC has voted to go ahead with the plan which means that the new centre will be established on the site of the former Horney College of Art in North London. The cost of the centre, to be opened in 1984, is expected to be £3 million.

Mr Jarvis said: "When it was first appraised, the idea was that the then government - Labour - would give funding for the capital costs and we were talking in terms of about £1 million and providing 100 residential places."

"Now the cost has risen to more than £3 million and 60 places are being provided rather than 100. It means the cost per residential place has gone up from £10,000 to £50,000 and there is going to be no government money."

"They are raising money by asking unions to give loans and there will certainly be a charge on all unions affiliated to the TUC. I voted against it at this point in time because I questioned whether this is the most effective way of providing these facilities."

The TUC said the cost would be met by allocating 2½p of the union affiliation fee increases already proposed for 1982, with a further increase of 1½p in 1984.

It said the centre would provide residential places to expand the training of its 300 tutors associated with the local training courses for shop stewards and full-time officers and as well provide more help to unions to develop their own educational programmes.

A statement added that the general council of the TUC recognized that the fundamental changes taking place throughout British industry would require even more highly trained union full-time and lay officers.

Micro's light work

A microprocessor that will automatically turn off unwanted lights is expected to save Sheffield City Polytechnic £50,000 in three years - which will more than pay for the new system.

The new system will make substantial savings by switching off lights near windows at pre-set times and when there is sufficient daylight and by switching off selected areas of lights outside normal hours.

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School to work

Community service or education and training? While national lobbies form to fight it out, one city is going ahead with its own firm choice

Down come the 16-19 barriers

Barriers between schools and further education colleges in Bradford will be swept away from September. They will share pupils and resources under a plan to integrate the whole of the city's provision for the 16 to 19s.

The scheme, which leapfrogs the continuing national controversy as to whether sixth forms should be handed over to tertiary colleges, is the first step towards a bigger goal. The city has decided to provide a comprehensive education and training system for all of its young people, including school leavers, without waiting for the rest of the country.

A year ago, Bradford's new Labour council decided that the city must mobilize all its resources to attack unemployment and try to reverse its industrial decline. The plan to extend education and training is the education service's response.

The city's 14 schools have been divided into six "commonwealths", each linked with one or another of the three colleges. Each commonwealth is required to provide, using both school and college facilities:

- a range of O levels which include specified key subjects and at least ten A level options;
- BEC and TEC courses;
- vocational skills courses and other work-related studies like the City and Guild foundation course and others which the Further Education Unit has developed.

The idea is that the commonwealths should be able to cater not only for ordinary pupils staying on but for unemployed youngsters who are allowed to study for up to 21 hours a week while drawing supplementary benefit, for Youth Opportunities Programme trainees, and for young workers on day release and other study arrangements.

It means that pupils, regardless of where they are enrolled, will study at the school or college which can best supply what they want - either in the form of a full-time course or as tuition in some of their subjects. As well as pupils dividing their time between schools and colleges, teachers and lecturers will in some cases do the same, or run sessions in clubs and other centres outside the educational network.

Work is also beginning on a programme to break down all courses into modules which students can combine into the packages they want. To start with the system will cover the first year of study, but the eventual aim is an integrated timetable covering the whole city so that students can fit together periods at several institutions to make up their study week.

A special design unit of seven lecturers at Bradford College, which was given the job of setting up the system, hopes to produce a common grid for timetabling next year. Mr Chris Roberts, a member of the unit, said this week that there was considerable enthusiasm in the schools as well as the colleges for the new system. "Some schools say that they are even prepared to take adult students," he said.

Children of jobless now number a million

A million children are now living in households where the breadwinner is out of work, says a new group formed this week to campaign on behalf of the unemployed.

The Unemployment Alliance, launched by the National Council of Voluntary Organizations, includes groups representing the child poverty lobby

But at present, it seemed that the biggest group who would take advantage of the arrangements were sixth formers who would spend half their time at colleges. Some college students, however, would go to schools for particular academic subjects.

Neither the unit nor the commonwealths had tried to work out how the differences between the regulations for schools and for colleges would affect the plan. "That is a matter for the authority, who have set up the system to solve," Mr Roberts said.

But while the commonwealths and the education department get on with sorting out how they will deal with their existing students, Bradford College, the careers department and the youth service will start tackling the wider goal - bringing youngsters who have left school back into the education and training system. They aim to provide as quickly as possible some kind of vocational preparation for every teenager - the goal to which the Government last week pledged itself for the country as a whole for some unspecified time in the future.

The college is proposing to set up an access unit which will not only seek out and inform youngsters about courses, but administer and coordinate special work-related studies for those for whom the traditional courses are unsuitable. It wants vocational resource centres set up to develop learning packages to back up schools and colleges in teaching, and to provide open-learning facilities for youngsters who do not want to attend classes.

Meanwhile, the careers department, together with the youth service, is hoping to set up a centre where unemployed youngsters, young workers, and full-time pupils can learn together.

Bradford diocesan authorities have agreed to let the careers service have

the former cathedral school for the centre. The idea is that it should be used for Youth Opportunities Programme projects and also for drop-in courses for other unemployed youngsters: but the principal careers officer, Mr Derek Hooper, wants colleges to send students there part-time for project based studies. He says he would also like employers to send their young workers, few of whom are yet covered by the Government's embryo unified vocational preparation programme, to the courses.

"So far we have not been entirely successful in convincing the Manpower Services Commission locally that they should support the scheme. But we are hoping that they will recognize that this is a practical move towards the kind of vocational preparation for all youngsters which they have declared should be a national priority," he said.

The careers service has already set up six neighbourhood centres where the unemployed make goods or carry out tasks for local residents by agreement. Local ward councillors are closely involved with the centres, but they run themselves without any direction from the city's administration. No money changes hands, but the centres are helping the unemployed to retain their self-respect and their skills or learn new ones, and building strong community links.

Mr Hooper says that if funds can be got from the Government, some of the centres may turn into co-operative enterprises making goods for sale and providing paid jobs.

"We don't think here that it's enough any longer for the careers service simply to go on trying to find jobs or fit youngsters into whatever schemes already exist," Mr Hooper said. "While we have to go on doing these things to the fullest extent possible, we also have to play a direct part in creating opportunities ourselves."

'National service' bid opposed

The Volunteer Centre, the organization funded by the Government to promote voluntary community service, is opposing proposals for a national community service scheme.

The centre, one of whose main activities is "discussing with statutory and voluntary authorities possibilities for extending voluntary participation", has joined a new lineup of voluntary organizations and trade unions to fight the proposals.

The new alliance, headed by the National Council of Voluntary Organizations, includes most of the major youth groups and youth service bodies, including the British Youth Council and the National Youth Bureau. It also represents the TUC and the National Union of Public Employees, whose members are likely to be closely affected by any scheme to draft or urge large numbers of youngsters into hospital or local authority-run services.

and the disabled, as well as the young unemployed. It proposes to work to increase public understanding of the social and economic costs of unemployment and to promote measures to combat it. The alliance will also investigate matters such as the level of unemployment benefits and the effect of unemployment on health.

The alliance plans to mount its own vigorous campaign against the lobbying of Youthcall, the pressure group which is calling for a national scheme, possibly compulsory, of community service. Its members are worried that, despite the fact that the Government is wary about the practicability and value of such a scheme, and its cost, it may be forced into it if a surge of youth unemployment overwhelms the Youth Opportunities Programme this autumn.

The alliance will put forward counter proposals urging that YOP should prepare now for its eventualities by pushing ahead with its plans for more places, providing proper vocational training, and setting up a new line-up of voluntary organizations. "Volunteers whose leaders brought together a group of politicians and academics which formed Youthcall, practically isolated from the rest of the voluntary sector."

Mrs Williams challenged over church schools abolition statement

by Bert Lodge

A challenge to Mrs Shirley Williams, former Education Secretary, to withdraw publicly a statement she made on BBC radio earlier this month has come from the present Labour spokesman on education, Mr Neil Kinnock.

In a letter to Mrs Williams, Mr Kinnock said, "At around 12.30am on May 9 on Radio 4, I and several of my companions heard you make a statement to the effect that the Greater London Labour party intended to 'do away with church schools'."

"You must know that such a statement was absolute nonsense."

Mr Kinnock then referred to a statement circulated from the GLLP last December which affirmed it had no intention to abolish denominational schools, protected in any case by Act of Parliament. It stressed that party policy was that no child be disadvantaged by any consideration.

A passage in the London party's manifesto had been much misrepresented by the Tories and the press, Mr Kinnock said. The statement, "no child should be educationally segregated by virtue of his or her sex, religious, ethnic or socio-economic status" was aimed at safeguarding children from the injustices, inadequate resources and inferior opportunities which result from division and discrimination in education. That policy has nothing to do with any question of denominational education, Mr Kinnock stressed.

His letter continued: "You must also know from your own past experience that you can do no good at all to the general cause of education and can only harm the concord which exists between the state and the voluntary sector by making such statements as the one made on May 9. I must therefore ask you to withdraw publicly that statement."

Mrs Williams said last week that she had only just received this letter. In any case, it would not be her practice to



Mr Kinnock: challenger



Mrs Williams: silent

make public her reply before Mr Kinnock had received it.

● Catholic teachers' leaders are seeking an early meeting with Mr Kinnock following their alarm at the content of some local Labour manifestos. The Catholic Teachers' Federation has announced.

"Some go so far as to call for the phasing out of denominational schools," says the federation.

Some children in council care still get the cane, says survey

by Richard Garner

At least one in four local authorities still allows corporal punishment to be used on children in their care, according to a survey published by the Society of Teachers Opposed to Physical Punishment last week.

STOPP has urged the Government to bring in legislation to ban its use on children in care and has cited a statement by Mr David Ennals, the former Labour Social Services Secretary, who said corporal punishment in children's homes was "neither desirable nor proper".

The survey revealed that 20 of the 130 local authorities allowed children to be "smacked" only, while 15 retained the use of the cane. Five did not reply to the survey.

STOPP singled out three authorities, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Northumberland, which allowed both boys and girls to be caned. Since the survey, the new Labour controlling group on Nottinghamshire County Council has announced its intention of banning the use of corporal punishment on children in care.

Mr Dick Clough, of the Residential Care Association, which has 5,000

members, said: "Our policy is to oppose all forms of violence in residential day care settings. The majority of our members don't want the facility of using corporal punishment."

Mr Tom Scott, education secretary of STOPP, added: "Beating children in care is even worse than corporal punishment in school. At least at school a child can appeal to its parents and they may do something about it."

Sir George Young, Under Secretary at the Department of Health and Social Security, said of the present Government's attitude towards the use of corporal punishment on children in care: "Although we would hope that progressively more local authorities will not find it necessary to authorize the use of corporal punishment, we have at present no intention of altering the present situation where the decision is left in their hands."

● Caning is to be banned in all Derbyshire schools until its effectiveness has been re-assessed, the Labour administration, which recently won control of the county council, announced last week.

Autism project gets no funds

A special school teacher is so convinced he is on the verge of discovering an important breakthrough in finding the origins of profound emotional disturbances and autistic behaviour in children, that he has applied to more than 30 charities for funds to help his research.

But Mr John Tierney, deputy head of Milton Ford School, Portsmouth, has been turned down by all of them. He felt especially bitter about one charitable trust which had listed among its funded projects: "The social history of the English Alehouse."

"Either society's priorities are seriously at fault, or the vision of pioneer work with disturbed children

has so far slipped from public memory as to be almost forgotten," he said. Mr Tierney said he needs at least six months working full time to process the attitudinal files on the detailed observation of disturbed children collected daily over the past seven years. He is sure that the results of this research will back up his belief that the origins of profound emotional disturbance emanate from family relationships, especially between mother and child.

His headmaster, Mr Alan Pearce, is supporting his bid for funds, as he thinks there is "considerable value" in his work.

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School to Work is edited by Mark Jackson

United States/Clive Cookson

Boston schools on verge of collapse

WASHINGTON: Americans have become used to the sad spectacle of school systems in the decaying industrial towns of Ohio teetering on the edge of bankruptcy and threatening to close down because they have run out of funds to pay their teachers.

But when the same fate befalls Boston—a city that is not only regarded as America's leading educational centre but is also experiencing an economic boom fuelled by local electronics firms—people still feel shocked.

The Boston School Committee, which controls public elementary and secondary education in the city, ran out of money last month. Unlike a local education authority in Great Britain, the school committee is elected separately from Boston City Council and is financially independent. So, when the schools exhausted their \$210m budget they could just have sent their 64,000 pupils home for the summer holidays two months early.

In fact a state court saved the schools from closure at the end of April, ordering the city of Boston to give the committee enough money to keep going until June 19, on the grounds that state law entitles all children to at least 180 days schooling annually.

The city complained that since it is going bankrupt itself, and having to lay off hundreds of police, firemen and other public employees, it could not afford to bail out the schools. So far, however, Boston has managed to keep the system open. But it could fall off the financial tightrope any day, bringing America's oldest system of public education down with it.

Needless to say, the uncertainty about the remainder of this year, coupled with the prospect of even



Crisis in America's prosperous seat of learning.

worse problems in 1981-82, have caused terrible demoralization among school staff.

The reasons behind Boston's fiscal crises are immensely complicated. Some of the most important are: an antiquated, inequitable and inefficient system of local and state taxes; intergovernmental political warfare between four government entities (Boston City Council, Boston School Committee, the Mayor of Boston and, to a lesser extent, the state of Massachusetts); and the city's tradition of appalling fiscal irresponsibility and brinkmanship. The worst run city in Britain would look good beside Boston.

With those ingredients, 1981 would have been a bad year for Boston's schools whatever happened. But the factor that made it really terrible was 2½.

In a referendum last November the people of Massachusetts approved a drastic tax-cutting plan called Proposi-

tion 2½. It forces local governments to reduce property taxes to 2½ per cent of the property's assessed market value.

These taxes, which resemble rates in Britain and are the only source of local revenue, currently average about four per cent statewide and are nearly 10 per cent in Boston; so huge cuts must be made. (The proposition does allow the reductions to take place in stages; local governments will not lose more than 15 per cent of their income per year.)

The famous prototype for 2½, California's Proposition 13, cut property taxes even more severely in that state three years ago. But California had a huge budget surplus and a well organized system of state taxes, which allowed the state government to bail out California's school systems and other local agencies. Massachusetts, by contrast, has no budget surplus, very low state sales and income taxes, and a

legislature that is still too afraid to the voters to raise state taxes to make up for the lost local revenue.

Therefore there can be no California-style bail-out in Massachusetts. And, to make the outlook even bleaker, the Reagan Administration in Washington is busily cutting back federal aid to local school districts.

Next year the Boston School Committee is likely to have only \$195m to spend, compared to the \$210m budgeted for this year and the \$240m that will actually have been spent if the schools do remain open until June 19. Two thousand teachers have been given notice of possible dismissal next year, and the committee expects actually to lay off at least 1,200 during 1981-82.

Boston courts are already buzzing with lawsuits trying to prevent the dismissals, or to ensure that they fall on certain categories of teacher. For example, the Boston Teachers' Union is claiming that the layoffs contravene its contract with the school committee, while civil rights groups want to save the jobs of newly recruited black teachers, who will otherwise be the main victims if the cuts are made according to seniority.

Whatever happens, the Boston School Committee is likely soon to be running a bare-bones system with little or no extracurricular activity or sports. No wonder Massachusetts' respected Commissioner of Education, Mr Greg Arneg, who leaves this year to become president of the Educational Testing Service, has warned that, unless arrives from somewhere before next year, his successor will have to watch the "dismantling" of public education in Boston.

West Germany/David Dungworth

Training places surplus

West German employers are continuing to make progress in providing training for school leavers.

During 1981 the number of training place agreements concluded went up three per cent, to 658,300. Only 20 of the 142 regional youth employment offices reported a shortfall of places, compared with 43 in 1979. At the end of last year, 39,000 training vacancies remained unfilled and 11,000 young people had not been found places.

This means that the supply of training places exceeded the demand for them by 4.2 per cent. This is well below the 12.5 per cent which the federal government (thinks necessary to ensure that school leavers have a reasonable choice of future jobs).

However it does represent a surplus of places which has not been achieved since the early 1970s, and is a welcome reversal of the shortfall in places which existed between 1975 and 1978.

Last year's total of 1.64 million young people undergoing vocational education was an all-time record in the Federal Republic. Only 10 per cent of the 16 to 19 age group now fail to complete a professional training place. This claims the Federal Minister for Education and Science, Herr Björn Engholm, means that West Germany has "the best vocational training system in the world".

The report notes a growing trend among grammar school leavers whose parents did not go to university to opt for "office apprenticeships" (training places in banking, insurance and government departments) rather than to continue their studies. About 13 per cent of applicants for training places in 1981 are likely to fall into this category.

Sweden/Chris Mosoy

New minister is announced

STOCKHOLM: Ms Ulla Tillander, a former Malmö teacher and a member of the Centre Party, has been appointed Schools Minister, following the resignation of Mrs Britt Mogård as part of the recent Conservative withdrawal from Sweden's three-party coalition government.

Following Mrs Mogård's resignation, it seems likely that Ms Birgitta Ulvhammar, the Social Democrat head of the National Board of Education, will stay in her chief executive position.

She had earlier been given indefinite leave of absence after a long conflict

with the Conservative Mrs Mogård. The "backing" made front page news at the time, and it was stressed by Education Ministry spokesmen that she would not be returning to her job.

However, after negotiations with Ms Ulvhammar's union representatives, the Education Minister Mr Jan-Erik Wikström said: "She is still general director of the Board of Education. I have not taken any decision that she should stop working."

Ms Ulvhammar is currently working on an official enquiry into the needs of immigrant children.

France/Barbara Cassusius

Mitterrand picks men

PARIS: The changes in French education, promised by socialist President François Mitterrand, have begun with the universities portfolio being brought back into the education ministry. A National Education Ministry it is called—in the provisional government formed by Prime Minister Paul Mauroy last week.

The move will be popular with teacher unions which always saw separate universities ministry created by President Giscard d'Estaing, as a threat to a cohesive education policy. In the new government Mitterrand's pledge for each school leaver to have received both a general education and a specialized training reflecting the importance attached to M. Mitterrand's education policy.

A frequent and stringent critic since 1975 has been the federal commission for community relations, Mr Al Granby, he has regularly pointed out that it is ridiculous to speak of Captain Cook or any other European "discovering" Australia when it was already inhabited and had never been "lost".

Many aborigines, following a trend in the United States and Great Britain, have begun to press for "black" history of Australia in which the white colonists and explorers would be portrayed as invaders, exploiters and imperialists.

There are an estimated 200,000 aborigines in Australia, about 50,000 of them in New South Wales. Mr Landis this week went some way to placating the aborigines by announcing new guidelines for writers of history texts in the state's schools.

He was speaking at a meeting of the aboriginal education unit of the Department of Education, the Australian Book Publishers' Association, the Lib-

rary Association of Australia and the aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

The Minister said the meeting had decided that guidelines should be set. He said the education department was already circulating draft guidelines for teaching aboriginal studies.

As examples of the prevailing racism in "traditional" children's books about the aborigines Mr Landis said they always emphasized witch doctors, nudity, boomerangs and the consumption of witchetty grubs.

"Children's books have rarely emphasized, until relatively recently, the important aspect of aboriginal culture, such as the complex social system, the moral codes, the deep spiritual interpretation of life and the real ecological oneness of the aborigine with his environment," Mr Landis said.

He said many writers had conveyed a concept of inferiority without actually using objectionable or racist terms but simply by stringing together a few disjointed facts with no explanation or discussion.

He hoped that future generations of Australians, black and white, would leave school with a better understanding of the contribution aborigines had made to Australian society.

Australia/Bill Purvis

Teachers told to teach more than 'stone age' view of aborigines

SYDNEY: A recent trend in Australia to give the aborigine a higher status and a better historical image in the nation's schools has been marked by the issue of new guidelines for history writers.

The Minister for Education in New South Wales, Mr Paul Landis, said too many writers of school textbooks had conveyed the concept of aborigine inferiority by the unthinking use of racist terms.

For the past few years aborigines' spokesmen and their sympathizers have deplored the "traditional" view of the Australian aborigine as someone barely above the level of stone age man.

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Sri Lanka

Boy prostitution

Sri Lanka's booming tourist industry is drawing a growing number of young boys into homosexual prostitution, according to a report presented to a recent international conference on child abuse and neglect, held in Amsterdam.

The report estimates that more than 2,000 boys aged between eight and 17 now earn money this way, and says that the increasing number are dropping out of school specifically to increase their earnings. Most boys move on to a life of crime once they become too old to earn their money through soliciting.

Says its author, Mr Tim Bond of the Switzerland-based children's rights organization, Terre des Hommes.

Specialist spy guides on sale in Europe and the United States, which detail useful contacts and locations, are being for the rapid increase in boy prostitution.

Other eastern countries where tourism is booming are also worried about the problem.

Republic of Ireland/John Walshe

Microchips for all under welcomed national scheme

DUBLIN: Every secondary school in the country is to get a micro computer under a new scheme announced by the Education Minister, Mr John Wilson.

The announcement, coming shortly before the general election on June 11 has proved to be a ready winner with the state's 850 secondary schools and with the general voting public.

Less than a quarter of the schools have computing facilities at present. These existing facilities were acquired through fund-raising activities organized by parents groups or else indirectly through state grants.

But under the £1,200,000 scheme, starting in September, every school will be entitled to computing facilities.

Computer studies has been an optional section within the mathematics syllabus since last year, but Mr Wilson has also announced that it will become an examinable subject in its own right by the school year 1983/4 at the latest.

In addition, substantial funds are being made available this year for an extensive series of in-service courses for teachers.

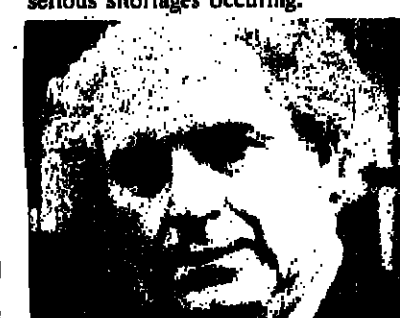
The boost for computer studies has important economic and manpower implications as well as an educational dimension.

The Republic is one of the top five producers of microelectronic components and assemblies. There are more

than 80 companies, including most of the world leaders, engaged in electronics in Ireland, employing over 11,000 people.

The annual output of these companies is over Irish £400,000,000. Most of the output is exported and represents about one-tenth of total exports from the Republic. The industry is expected to increase its output further and double it by 1984.

There had been fears of a shortage of skilled personnel for the fast expanding industry, but Mr Wilson's boost for secondary schools coupled with other measures in further and higher education, particularly the expansion of electronics courses, should prevent serious shortages occurring.



John Wilson



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"Depressing" pupil figures explain clashes.

India/A. S. Abraham

Education figures show why caste hatred is growing

BOMBAY: More than one out of every three primary schools in India has only one teacher. Less than one out of every 10 primary schools has more than five teachers.

Sixty-nine million children are enrolled in lower primary classes throughout the country but only 38 per cent of them are girls.

Eighteen million children are enrolled in higher primary classes but only 33 per cent are girls. Fewer than nine million children are enrolled in secondary education and only 29 per cent are girls.

Village children form just over 75 per cent of total enrolment in lower primary classes, 61 per cent in upper primary classes and 47 per cent in secondary classes.

In lower primary school, the all-India pupil-teacher ratio is 41:1; in higher primary it is 23:1 and in secondary it is 18:1.

These latest statistics are included in the Fourth Educational Survey, undertaken by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), a Schools Council-type body, the findings of which have now been published.

The fourth survey, confined to school education, offers a wealth of data on a wide range of items, including school libraries, medical check-up

services, school buildings, and Untouchable and tribal enrolment.

Government-recognized schools in all 22 states and nine union (federally administered) territories are covered. The findings have been used to formulate school education strategy for the sixth five year plan (1980-85) and subsequent plans.

Untouchable children, the survey reveals, comprise less than 13 per cent of total enrolment in lower primary classes. Tribal children make up just over six per cent.

At the higher primary stage, Harijan or Untouchable children form only 11 per cent of total enrolment.

At secondary level, Harijan enrolment is not even 10 per cent of the total, while that of tribals is not even three per cent.

It is vital to bear these depressing data in mind when viewing the frequent clashes in India between the upper castes and the Untouchables and tribals over reserved quotas for the latter in jobs and educational institutions.

Even though Harijan and tribal candidates are top in the ground to challenge seriously upper caste social, economic and educational dominance, upper caste antagonism towards them for daring to aspire above their station is fierce and growing.

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Talkback

Survival of the fittest?

Ian Ward

How to get to teach most secondary school subjects is quite clear: you read for a degree in the subject, you take a PGCE course in the subject, and you then teach that subject.

Not always so with physical education. While most young PE teachers currently coming through the higher education system have taken undergraduate work in the subject, there are still many being trained to teach PE who do not hold a first degree in the subject or in a related field. And while this possibility exists, it will continue to be exploited, for two major reasons.

The first is that the best sixth form talent is likely to be dissuaded from studying PE for a first degree. The complementary reason is that sport is a focus of recreational interest for undergraduate students from a range of disciplines. So why not take a one-year course and teach it, irrespective of the subject area of one's undergraduate work?

Then, too, PE is an ever-widening subject with a danger element in certain activities, so it is not possible to cover the required range or depth of

work during a one-year PGCE course. The question might well need to be modified to: "Who should be allowed to teach PE?" with the problem exacerbated by both prejudices and vested interests.

Many PE teachers and advisers are not graduates and a few resent what they see as graduate preference. The vested interest may be more insidious. In higher education today the name of the game is survival. Some institutions offering both undergraduate and PGCE courses in PE might well work in alliance for the furtherance of their own interests and to the detriment of rival institutions.

So who should be accepted for PGCE training in PE? Obviously students who have studied PE as a major part of their work at undergraduate level. Presumably those, too, who have taken PE as one half of their undergraduate work. One university offers an attractive degree course in which a third of the work can be in PE.

Now we move into the area of related degrees such as, for instance, Sport and Recreation Studies. These offer clear subject connections as a basis for teaching PE. Thereafter, the connections become more tenuous even though relationships with the proposed teaching area may exist. Exercise physiology has clear connections: Mathematics because we analyse movement? Social Studies? Geogra-

phy? Can students from these areas be adequately trained in one year? The conflicting worry is that the best of these students may make very good PE teachers. If we deny them this opportunity, then it might well be the "closed shop" could be equalled with the closed mind, for there are developers in many fields. It might be appropriate to offer one type of training of students with a PE background and another type for a limited number of graduates who have not taken PE or related subject at undergraduate level.

Clearly the growth of PE - related undergraduate courses is welcome because they allow students to keep their opinions open for longer - which fact will hasten the demise of the BEd degree. There is, therefore, an inevitability that in the near future almost all secondary school teachers will be trained at post-graduate level, and in PE there is an urgent need for rationalization. The rationalization is likely to be cruel to individuals and to institutions, but the future of the subject warrants an urgent reappraisal followed by national directives. The subject's great policy maker, Rainbow Urge, must go and stand in the corner wearing his pointed little headpiece and think yet again.

Ian Ward is lecturer at Madeley School of Physical Education, North Staffordshire Polytechnic.

Where is the Wendy House now?

Margaret Lawson

Although there is no evidence to support them many experienced infant teachers feel that, ironically, as numbers have fallen and they are teaching classes which are far smaller than those they had in the sixties and early seventies, they are finding children more difficult to control.

They seem to need to exercise firmer control and, often against their will, they have to reprimand children more frequently. There have always been mischievous children and individuals who were at times disobedient and even disruptive, but there seems to be a growing feeling that the number of difficult children is increasing. It is claimed more frequently that children "will not listen" and that they do not comply speedily and readily to the teacher's requests and directions as they did in the past. There is a restlessness and lack of concentration which was not so common a few years ago.

The explanation offered for this apparent change in behaviour is usually the increasing instability of family life and the lack of parental control.

Some feel it is a manifestation of social change. Others attribute it to a growth of lawlessness and violence in society, and particularly to the way this is depicted on television, which is said to be a major factor in the behaviour of children. It is also claimed that when they first come to school children are more difficult to control, then some or all of these factors may be influencing their behaviour. But there may be other explanations.

Recent years have seen a move from the child-centred model of infant teaching espoused in the Plowden Report. There has been an increasing emphasis on time spent on teacher-initiated and directed activities and less on children's self-chosen pursuits. Patterns of class-room organization adopted have tended to decrease the independence of children and to reduce their autonomy. They have less scope for initiative and responsibility. Many infant teachers permit children to select their own activities from a variety of alternatives only after they have completed assigned daily tasks in reading, writing and mathematics.

very small proportion of the day the amount of time the slower children spend in discovering and exploration, creative work and imaginative activities. These children are usually the ones most in need of first-hand experience with concrete materials in real situations, and of opportunities to interact and communicate with others. Could it be that, extended periods working at desks from work-words and work-books at the mastery of skills leads to boredom, frustration and so to restless behaviour?

Other teachers divide the children into three rotating groups so that at any one time one third of the class are engaged in reading and/or writing activities, one third in mathematics and one third in activities of their own choice or in teacher-directed practical work. Unless the assigned work in mathematics is practical this means that two thirds of the class sit working quietly at desks at any one time. Each child, regardless of maturity, needs and current interests, spends up to two-thirds of the day like this.

This may sometimes be an appropriate allocation of time for any one individual, but it is unlikely to be suitable for all the children in the class every day. If it is rigidly applied this three-fold type of organisation can easily lead to lack of interest and motivation and hence to undesirable behaviour and the need for teachers to check it.

Both systems of organization seem likely to diminish opportunities for active learning and the furniture and equipment of many infant class-rooms reflect this. The frequent visitor notices that the Wendy House is becoming less common, and sand and water trays appear to be used less frequently and the once ubiquitous bricks are less in evidence. Even the range of creative activities seems to be limited.

It may be that cause and effect are mutually reinforcing. As children appear restless and easily get out of control teachers limit the opportunities for more active pursuits, which tend to be noisy and messy, and keep them for longer periods at quieter teacher-directed tasks, which are often of less intrinsic interest and less motivating. This leads to lack of concentration and effort and misbehaviour requiring reprimand, which in turn leads to further restriction.

Infant teachers in recent years, like all their professional colleagues, have experienced dramatically falling rolls and financial restraints. Fears of redundancy and even redundancy, especially in earlier years, exist. Prospects of promotion have decreased, especially with the merging of small



Sand and water trays seem to be less in evidence in infant classrooms larger primary schools. The confidence and enthusiasm of the post-Plowden years has decreased.

Young children are as quick to sense the unspoken anxieties and frustrations of the adults around them as they are to respond to their enthusiasm and eager endeavour. Could it be that the attitudes of teachers and the emotional climate of schools are contributory causes of the changes in behaviour which are felt to be taking place?

Margaret Lawson teaches in the department of education studies, The Polytechnic.

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School assemblies can take up the equivalent of four to six weeks of a primary child's education.

Niall Aillsop takes a caustic look at some varieties of this morning ritual

'Hands together, eyes closed'

Morning assembly still maintains its ritualistic grip on teachers and schools. What relevance do these gatherings have for children? Are they for many children just a colossal waste of time, or even educationally damaging?

As a teacher and head teacher in a variety of primary schools, I have observed four types of assembly: the religious assembly, the secular assembly, the "grumbling" assembly and the class or group assembly.

The Religious Assembly, led by the head teacher, is still the most common assembly, presumably due in part to the fear instilled by the 1944 Act. A story, a hymn and a prayer, "a quick run round the Bible" as one teacher knowingly put it. Children love stories, they love to sing cheerful songs and they love to keep one eye open when told to close both.

And yet what are they given? A diet of verity's and beguile's that is indigestible even to those eager young ears. Archaic words and phrases which, even if simplified and updated, have to compete with the more basic problem of sitting cross-legged on a cold floor trying not to cough. Having to stand up "quickly and quietly" (and both at the same time!) is worth the effort if only because we like things as they are.

Of course children love to sing; they do respond to a rhythmic or rousing melody. Songs known and enjoyed can be a great leveller of children: the haves and the have-nots, the high-flyers and the not-so-high can be as one. So they are given hymn books to ensure that they never learn the words, if indeed they are learn-

able, and to make doubly sure that the poorer readers learn to mime.

The ritual is rounded off with a prayer, either the "listened to" variety, or one said in unison such as The Lord's Prayer, or both. A prayer, say for famine-stricken East Africa, is heard not in terms of the words and their real message, but as a beginning, "Please Lord..." and an end, "Amen".

Children absorb the prayer solely in terms of the intonations that bring it to its conclusion, as this also marks the temporary end of their opportunity to get up to all sorts of diversionary devilment - one eye open of course. Said in unison The Lord's Prayer, "Harold be Thy name", gradually becomes a fusion of incomprehensible words that blend beautifully in a relief-giving AMEN.

The Secular Assembly, in many of its patterns, is not unlike the religious assembly; it is normally secular only in its story theme - the credits are omitted, if you like. The annual round of Nature's Wonders, Albert Schweitzer and the Red Cross Flag, while possibly offering some children interesting starting points, are scarcely done justice when made the subject of a ten-minute synopsis.

One hundred-plus children, with an ability range of perhaps 10 years, huddled together, necks straining, in less than intimate contact with the story-teller, are not really going to appreciate the subtleties of the Red Cross Flag. They are probably too busy trying to attach their charitable little replica onto the backside in front.

The "Grumbling" Assembly is alive and well, and still haunts many schools. Again, this is normally head-led, centring round a lengthy tirade against the assembled children on some behaviour or discipline problem that he or she has skillfully unearthed. I am not suggesting that an assembly of the school's children may not be necessary on occasions to deal with some serious issue - but not every day.

The inevitable result of the daily dose is that the trivial begins to assume major importance and becomes counterproductive, thus creating the built-in need for further grumbles. For the majority of children, innocent of any misdemeanour in the first place, it is an unnecessary waste of their time; for the few not-so-innocent there is the opportunity to hide in anonymity, in the hope that everyone will assume it was someone else.

The Class or Group Assembly is a more recent attempt by teachers to actually involve the children. Approaches here vary considerably as does the subject matter - anything from reading stories to re-enacting some historical event. The common factor is the apparent involvement of the children - and by "involvement", I mean children actively thinking and learning.

Unfortunately, this involvement all too often affects only the participants, for whom it is I'm sure very rewarding and motivating. And from the audience's point of view the spectacle of seeing one's peers "up there" is, if nothing else, entertaining.

Assemblies reflect the school in which they take place, and especially the head teacher. The rituals detailed above do happen, not everywhere, not all the time, but they do occur, and frequently. I use the word "ritual" deliberately, as the format of so-called collective worship has become almost prescribed, reducing it to a succession of cues to which both children and adults respond without thinking. What is the value of such an exercise to children already suffering their complement of listening practice in the classroom?

Just think of the time they would have. In some schools the equivalent of four to six weeks can be spent each year assembling. That is four to six weeks of a child's education gone for ever.

I am not advocating that schools never meet collectively to sing, to act and to listen. Nor am I suggesting that religion and/or moral education be stamped out. Both of these elements in assemblies tend to by-pass most children anyway. The values schools wish to pass on to their children are best assimilated in the more intimate surroundings of the classroom. Assemblies will no doubt continue in one form or another. My hope is that they might become less frequent, and at the same time more meaningful.

Niall Aillsop was until recently head of a primary school in Wiltshire.



Educationists, including heads and teachers, acknowledge that children are at their most receptive early in the day. Why then do they tolerate such repeated time-wasting?

Dare I suggest that for many teachers it is exactly this time-wasting element (that provides the attraction of assembly)? The reality of assembly means that the real business of the day may not start until some time after 9.30am, at least half an hour less to prepare for, and half an hour more to think about the unprepared. Time to take it easy while the head drones, hoping against hope that someone will fall to stand up "quickly and quietly", so that it can be practised a couple of times.

I do an injustice to many hard-working and conscientious teachers whose main concern will always be to get back to the classroom to teach. I know such teachers exist - and that many of them feel themselves to be in a minority.

On the other hand, many head teachers would argue that such a daily ceremonial is necessary to assert their authority, to keep in touch with the children. But couldn't a more intimate and relevant contact be found in the classroom, a contact which might grow into a respect more meaningful and secure than anything emanating from a plague of assemblies?

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Joe Santaniello on the growth of self-evaluation schemes

Looking inward

More than three-quarters of local education authorities in England and Wales have now drawn up or adopted plans for some form of self-evaluation. If these are implemented, the consequences for the management of schools will be far-reaching and, as yet, unpredictable. Perhaps the most far-reaching effects will be felt in the primary schools.

There is some evidence from Patricia Ashton's survey of primary school teachers that we are unable to state our aims clearly. Accordingly, when pressed for definitions, we may accept educational clichés as goals, rather than show a careful consideration of alternatives. If these i.e.s. schemes require us to make detailed statements of aims and intentions supported by rational decision making, this alone will have justified their existence.

There is a dearth of specialist skills and expertise in assessment techniques in our primary schools. A whole generation of teachers are now teaching, ignorant of the first-hand "big bang" effects of the 11-plus. Some sections of primary education, such as nursery and infant schools have never been affected directly by an external examination.

Of course, some i.e.s. have been required to administer screening procedures, and many voluntarily use standardized reading, numeracy, verbal and non-verbal reasoning tests. But this only highlights the disparity between schools. One result of the schemes will be new insights into pupil assessment; but if we are to take full advantage of these, teachers must be ready to communicate their successes and failures. Only by cross-fertilization of ideas and practices can we avoid becoming too parochial and insular.

Subjectivity will be a crucial element in the responses to the schemes. Teachers must learn to "step out" of the classroom and view themselves objectively. Courses in the theory of curriculum evaluation could help to build up strategies of self-appraisal. Primary teachers must be encouraged to attend full- and part-time courses, preferably ones which include the wider context of curricular development and dissemination. So the expansion of in-service degree courses in colleges and universities must continue, and not be subject to an economic implosion.

A soft option throughout any process of self-evaluation is the adoption of consensus criteria. At first consensus seems attractive: the

middle way would appear to be a standard at which to aim. But does it reflect educational aspirations, or teacher complacency? There are cases where the needs of children are not being served by teachers where, put very simply, teachers feel that "we don't want change because we like things as they are". Inertia like this is hard to move.

One example emerged from the HMI's Primary Survey, which pointed out that, while 40 per cent of schools had a scheme for teaching science, in as many as 80 per cent of schools visited "no individual item of observational or experimental work occurred". Clearly, although four out of ten heads wanted science taught, at least eight out of ten teachers did not. This hidden tug of war between "progressive" heads and "traditional" staff makes a nonsense of consensus.

While many of the schemes introduced allow for detailed answers to questions, many are based on checklists. These are easy and quick to use, but can lead to superficiality. I can see a need for in-depth studies and expert advice for schools which face particular difficulties - such as those which include a large non-English intake, or those which suffer inner-city blight and the erosion of expectations caused by high-density living and unemployment.

As to the questions themselves, the manner in which many are framed make them purely rhetorical. Does anyone expect a negative reply to "Does my overall planning of the school take into account the background and needs of all the children?" (Avon) or "Does the school encourage a respect for persons and property and a concern for others which is genuine?" (Salford). (Maybe there should be a footnote requiring that "no" answers will be accompanied by the head's letter of resignation.)

Many schemes imply full staff participation, but some are addressed solely to headteachers. "Evaluation is a main function and concern of the head teacher. It is also a responsibility of the local education authority, and therefore essential that the two partners are brought together in common endeavour" (Dorset).

If self-evaluation is to mean anything, it must include all teachers. The exercise must not be seen as an unholy alliance by the administrators and heads against the classroom teachers. To counteract this, there must be machinery set up whereby the staff's perspectives can be recorded. One person's viewpoint, even if he or she is the head, does not constitute a valid evaluation.

If self-evaluation is to live up to its name, there must be a realization by heads that they must surrender some of their power, in return for staff cooperation. For their part, teachers must demonstrate willingness to learn new skills of assessment and try new techniques of self-examination. The reward for all will be greater self-knowledge.

By examining ourselves, we will learn to recognize our own strengths and weaknesses, and thus become more independent of the imposition of authority from outside. A consequence of self-appraisal could be a decline in the influence of the local adviser and other outside bodies. Their opinions will still be sought and respected. But as teachers become more self-confident, self-sufficient and closer bonded together, they will take more personal responsibility for what goes on in schools.

Joe Santaniello is deputy head of Giltshill Primary School, Hull. He is currently doing research into self-evaluation in schools.

The street that I'd like

Virginia Makins reports on the kind of environment children say they like to live in, and the problems which they meet in their streets and towns

"The need for improvement in our society is connected with keeping children and teenagers happy in a friendly society." That was how a Manchester 14-year-old summed up his ideas about the town he would like.

He was one of the 800 entrants to a competition organized by the Professional Institutions Council for Conservation and The TES, in connection with the Council of Europe's Campaign for Urban Renaissance.

Eight to eleven-year-olds were asked to describe "The Street that I'd like". Twelve to fifteen-year-olds were asked about "The town that I'd like". Sixteen to eighteen-year-olds considered "The future of our towns and cities" - there were very few entries in this last category.

The competition encouraged different approaches: entries ranged from short poems to long essays, from attractive pictures to elaborate maps and plans. Some children undertook major projects, others went in for imaginative writing. Whatever their form, many of the entries were revealing about the kinds of places children like to live, and the difficulties many of them encounter in their streets and towns.

For the younger children, cars were a major bugbear - whether parked, or dodging at top speed down residential streets in the rush hour. Very few children reported, as this one did: "my mum knows we are safe, playing in the street". Dogs, and their mess and dangers, were a lesser problem, but one that surprising numbers of children remarked on.

Many children also complained for more space for young children to play - and a place where that available space was often out of bounds.

Few descriptions had such a happy ending as this: "We all started playing our games round the car park/garage space, but then some signs were put up saying no ball games allowed. And we had to go back to playing inside our houses and people complained, but this stopped when a man gave us an idea. It was about an unused piece of land which wasn't in too bad a condition. So we mowed it and raked it and cleared away the access rubble. We then fitted some goal posts and it is now a good football pitch".

More often the children reported something like this: "My road has two areas of grass. But one has a sign saying No Ball Games and the other has a sewer going through it". Another No Ball Games sign was "wonky, because we don't like it". In Balham, London, boys "play football around the shopping area because they are not allowed to play on the grass".

There were strong calls for more exciting surroundings: not adventure playgrounds, but "lots of places for adventure and dark tunnels" as a seven-year-old put it. Both the under-elevens and the young teenagers often asked for "little woods for adventure" which could "give children a great deal of fun making camps and treasure hunts".

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the most contented eight to thirteen-year-olds were the ones living in well-off suburbs and in the country. Several estate and town children chose some holiday town or village, in the Lake district or by the sea, as their ideal habitat. "There would be no cars allowed to park there. There would be a lot of wildlife around. There would be miles of coastline and when you go inland there is a lot of woodland".

A country boy in Derbyshire said: "I like to live in Marchay because I can go for a walk in the field and I can go and catch tadpoles in the brook".

Other entries read like a paeon to suburban life. In a salubrious part of Buckinghamshire "we like it because we have big gardens and good climbing trees and there are lots of friends to play with and woods to go for walks". Less fortunate children asked for "a nice quiet road with a piece of grass where you can go for walks".

There were plenty of good suggestions for improvements. The one that perhaps came up most often was more bicycle tracks. Several children asked for evening and weekend use of the grounds and sports halls of local schools and colleges. Several described work children could do, clearing waste land and tidying up, to improve their neighbourhoods.

Teenagers, perhaps predictably, often demanded more swimming pools and leisure centres. Indeed, some descriptions of an ideal town were reminiscent of the pre-war socialist paradise of Babar's Celesteville, with its Palaces of Work and Leisure.

Many young people believed that more activities and facilities for teenagers would cut down

vandalism: "If there were more opportunities, I am almost positive the amount of violence would decrease, and indeed vandalism". But several realized that costly municipal enterprise was not always necessary - what young people need, they maintained, was a variety of "places that young people can run themselves".

A few were doubtful about the effects of too many planned facilities. "I enjoy sport so I thought about putting in a leisure centre, but then I changed my mind because it would make the village just like any city or town", wrote a ten-year-old. "I have not quite thought yet how I can incorporate my fondness for discos with the scenery of the eighteenth century", said an older girl.

The old, the handicapped, and the needs of mothers with young children, received a lot of solicited attention. Children recommended: "a mobile shop so that old people would not have to go to the supermarket in agony"; "a youth centre where mothers can talk to their babies and talk to each other"; "clubs for old people and latch key children".

A few children produced super-technological solutions to the deficiencies of towns and cities, devising elaborate underwater and underground towns, with complex services. But far more were suspicious of "the technology of computerized machines".

Instead, they described their suburban and rural idylls, with roses trailing round Peace Street, or Happiness Lane. "The actual heart of my town would be traditional, with a green. In summer gentlemen will be seen pottering around in little white hats with bat and ball playing cricket".

A number of the older entrants thought it important to "start with a town that already existed - that already had a community and contained some of the more beautiful aspects of old housing". Several children remarked that one of the most important elements of streets and cities is people. "The one thing that is needed is a close and civilized community, people helping each other and generally being friendly".

"When I was born, visitors from 13 nations came to see me in my little bedroom, and I think it was a very good introduction to the world", wrote a boy from Balham. In Northern Ireland, "The town would be of one religion, instead of everyone running about fighting each other".

But a handful had no faith in goodwill and tolerance between neighbours. Some extremely repressive, orderly towns were described, often rigorously divided by social class. The unemployed did all the dirty jobs; there were stocks and treadmills for offenders; people were only admitted after a health test. Police were armed to the teeth. There was even one town ringed by an electric fence with manned perimeter to "keep the promise of a crime-free environment".

David Peace of the Royal Town Planning Institute and John Weller of the Royal Institute of British Architects judged the competition. Both thought that many entrants failed to show much awareness of the qualities - of building, of light and colour or of natural forms - that make streets and towns attractive, or otherwise.

John Weller missed a sense of history in many of the entries. David Peace believed that the original terms of reference may have steered too many contestants to concentrate on leisure and open spaces, and neglect the importance of buildings. But the judges were impressed by the freedom teachers had given children to tackle the job in their own way, and the variety in the entries. And they were encouraged by the number of children who did show awareness of many of the important ingredients of successful streets and towns.

In the end, they awarded prizes to a very wide range of entries - plans, pictures, imaginative writing and design, and last but not least, good clear essays. The excellent project work from Dean Row County High, Wiltshire, Cheshire took seven awards, and the essays of Park Grove School, Birmingham collected four.

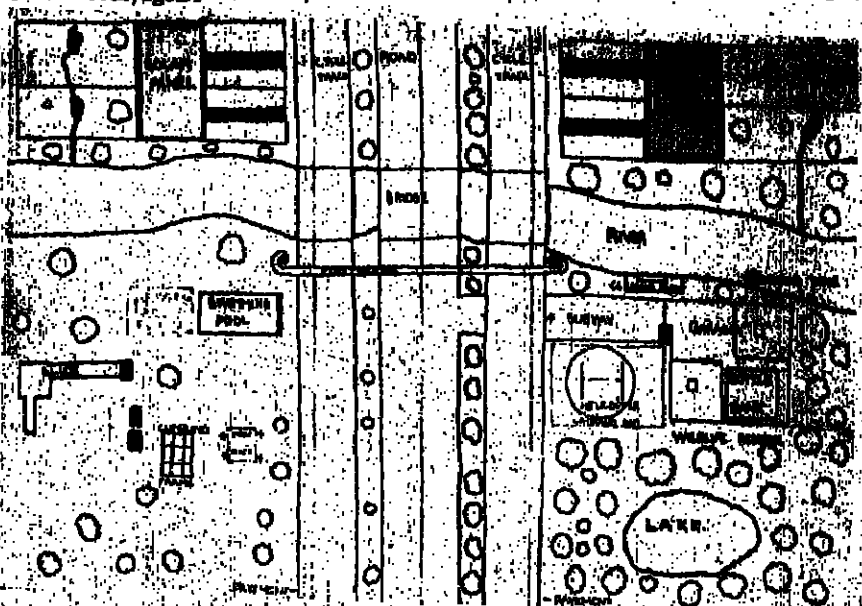
There were only five awards in the older category, so some extra runner-up prizes went to the younger groups. In Groups One and Two, joint first and second prizes replaced third prizes. Under-16s who went in for Group Three were judged on their merits in that group.

The Professional Institutions Council for Conservation was founded after the Countryside Conference of 1970, where the Duke of Edinburgh called for co-operation between all the professions that directly affect the environment. 16 professional institutions, representing architects, planners, engineers, surveyors, foresters and others, are represented on the Council.

It would be much better if we could have nice, clean towns in Britain, to have are some reasons to help:-

Instead of throwing litter on the ground put it in the litter - and that have the kids on - these I have provided in my town.

John Woods, aged 9



Samantha Ledger, aged 12



Nadine Smith, aged 9

Isabel Lovelock, aged 10

Ruth Weiss talks to Dzingai Mutumbuka, Zimbabwe's Minister of Education, one year after independence

'We want to show people we can do it'

A year after independence, the countryside of Zimbabwe still bears the scars of the war. Villages are hard to find and are no longer where one remembered; hideously entangled telephone and electricity wires, gaping potholes on rural roads, ruins of one-time missions, are part of the landscape.

By contrast, Salisbury, with its tree-lined avenues, its garden suburbs, is an island unto itself. So, it seems, are its white schools.

"Whites are not prepared to take too many shocks in one go," commented the Minister of Education, Dzingai Mutumbuka, when asked why it was that white schools, given black pupils here and there, appear untouched by change, while in all African schools in the black suburbs, school is virtually a non-stop operation. There teachers double up, there are afternoon and morning sessions, and in all there are around 1.8 million children at school this year, compared with 800,000 last year. More than 150,000 children are in secondary schools, and the Minister says he is still a long way from his target of "one child - one school place".

It has taken a good deal of persuasion, makeshift ad hoc action, some foreign aid and a new system of teacher training to get to the point reached now. In the black urban suburbs, change was almost instant, given the doubling-up system, the eagerness on the part of pupils and their parents. But teachers needed some persuading to go to the rural areas.

More than 500 secondary schools have been established in the countryside since independence. Dzingai Mutumbuka says: "We are pouring resources into the rural areas, because as soon as the rural areas catch up with the urban areas, we will have solved the contradiction that happens in Third World countries, where the urban areas are in the twentieth century, the rural areas in medieval times."

He emphasizes the problem of moving the teachers. "At first they thought I was joking; we had to suspend some teachers who refused to go to rural areas. But now they say, these are our people, we willingly go anywhere to teach them."

"It has been a good situation, and also it made many people re-examine themselves, their role as intellectuals. Yesterday, it was the peasant who made sacrifices supporting the liberation struggle, and all he had was destroyed. Now it is the turn of the intellectual to be what I call the new frontier troops, who will conquer the next stage of the struggle."

"Between this year and next, we want to build more than a thousand primary schools. We want to show people we can do it, that we're not just beggars, but that we can make use of whatever is given to us."

For some time to come, Zimbabwe will need foreign teachers. Meanwhile, the scheme labelled Zimbabwean National Teachers Colleges - ZINTEC - is under way. This is based again on Mozambique models. Young people straight out of secondary schools are given a crash teacher training course. Once they have passed it, they are instantly placed in charge of classes, and learn teaching by doing.

"It's just like nurses learn," the Minister explains. "First they learn theory, then they apply their theoretical training in the classroom for, say, 10 terms. Every term they write assignments, do a correspondence course, and are visited regularly by tutors each week. The tutors supervise the teaching. Twice a year they go back to the college for three weeks at a time. At the end of ten terms - that is, after nearly three

and a half years - they go back to college for 17 weeks, and write their exams."

Another problem inherited by the war is the question of orphans, children who had been in refugee camps and are now back. Most of them have been settled on farm schools, where work in the classroom and work in the field is combined, so that children learn to fend for themselves. One such school, the Minister said, is "embarrassingly successful" - more people are clamouring to enter it. The harvest reaped this year can compete in the market place.

In all, eight schools are envisaged for former refugee children. Their target will be a combination of ordinary general education, combined with training of some kind, ranging from farming to scientific work. On the Shamva School Farm some 2,500 children live on what was once a tobacco farm. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees helped, as did a Danish volunteer group. The Danish Development Aid From People to People assisted materially during the war, and also trained young Zimbabweans in Denmark, more than 100 of whom have returned home.

There is a primary school at Kemphaven near Shamva, and a secondary school on the neighbouring farm. About 1,700 primary pupils have returned from Mozambique. The school is one of 22 farms acquired from white farmers in the days of Bishop Muzorewa, and now used to resettle families. The farms have been divided into small plots, with one larger area cultivated communally.

Both the primary and secondary schools - the latter with around 900 students - are Government boarding schools. The staff, are almost all former teachers from camps in Mozambique; until earlier this year they received no salaries, but now their status has been regularized. The primary school has a headmaster and two deputies, all of whom are non-teaching. The objective of such schools is to integrate academic tuition with practical work; similar projects have been started in the Midlands and in Matabeleland. There are still Danish volunteers, most of whom teach technical subjects and select students for training as teachers. The volunteers want to withdraw as soon as the scheme can be run without them. They want to work on similar projects elsewhere in Zimbabwe.

While whites are still mainly concerned about "falling standards", blacks are trying in every way they can to provide schooling for their communities. Apart from spectacular schemes such as that at Shamva, there are small projects, in areas devastated by the war, where families have often lost not only a home but their livestock as well, and where malnutrition is serious. Here school and community often work together in an effort to establish gardens, to feed parents as well as children. Agencies such as OXFAM or the UK-based Zimbabwe Project are involved in such efforts.

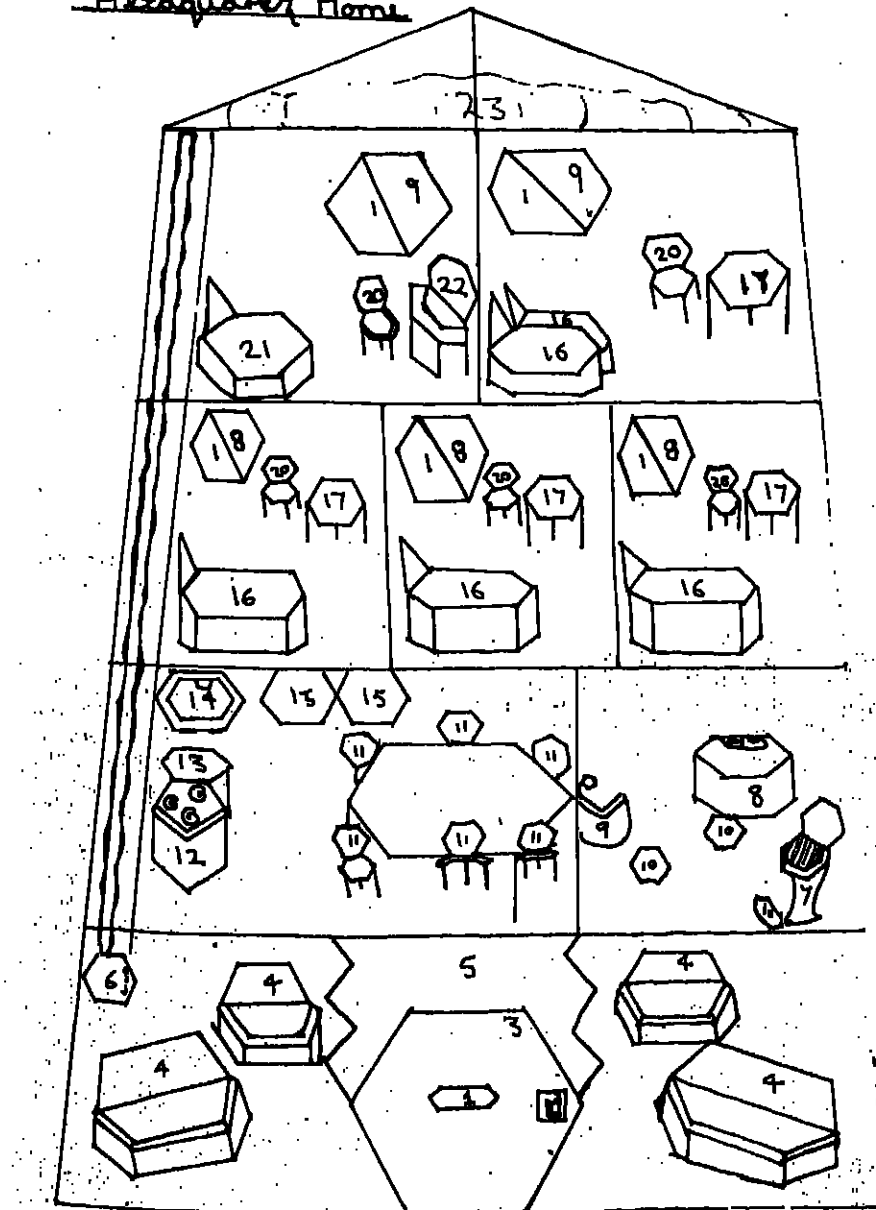
In all the schools, the lack of material is only too obvious, as is in many cases, despite ZINTEC, the lack of trained teachers. It will take a very long time in most black rural or indeed urban schools to reach the "standards" so prized by the whites.

About a thousand people made a pilgrimage to Shamva earlier in the year, among them about 700 teachers, who were amazed at the progress made. Twenty classrooms had been built, and most of the dormitories, all in about six months. A new system for a new country: this is the aspiration, with, it seems, a good chance of making it work.

The Street that I'd like
The street that I'd like to live in would be a street with cottages. The cottages would have thatched roofs. The colour of the cottages would be white with roses growing up the walls. The curtains would be white not with flowers cut out of them. They would be hung on a gold rail in front of them would be a coloured curtain. They would be hung at the top. They would come down and be tied in the middle.

Nadine Smith, aged 9

The Inside of a Hexagon Home



Shahid Patel, aged 10

Competition results

Group One (8-11) The Street that I'd like.

Joint first prize: Rebecca Marsh, Westbury Park Primary School, Baywater Avenue, Bristol; Shari Patel, Nascot Wood School, Watford, Herts. £25 to each, £20 for their school funds.

Joint second prize Group entry from seven children at Park School, Kilmarnock, Scotland; David Seel, New Mills Lower School, Nr. Stockport, Derbyshire. £15 each.

Runners up: Karen Leverton and Helen Loten, Nascot Wood School; Paul Fowler, Street Lane Primary School, Denby, Derbyshire; Polly Mercer, Hydeburn School, Balham, London; Isabel Lovelock and Nadine Smith, Woodfield Middle School, Kidderminster; Worst, Michelle Price, Bedford High School, Bedford; John Woods, Westlands Junior School, Chelmsford; Eleri, Rowena Gill and Kirsty Lewis (joint entry) Little Kingshill, County Combined School, High Wycombe, Bucks; Helen Myles, Manor Middle School, Brimcombe, Herefordshire; Philip Brooks, Lestrey Ann Norman, and Stuart Drake (joint entry), Tenho School, Whitehaven, Cumbria. £5 book tokens for single entrants, £2 book tokens for members of groups.

Group Two (12-15) The Town that I'd like.

First prize: Alan Shipman, Royal Grammar School, Guildford, Surrey. £40, £35 for his school fund.

Second prize: Joseph Wardle, Hatfield High School, Doncaster. £30.

Third prize: Louise Watson, Hatfield High School. £20.

Runners up: Rachel Larkish, Park Grove School, Birmingham; Jonathan Clements, Copley High School, Stalybridge, Cheshire. £5 book tokens.

Royal Alexandra and Albert School, Reigate, Surrey. £30 to each, £20 for their school funds.

Second prize: Steven Welch and Paul Elliott, the British School in the Netherlands. £10 each.

Runners up: Judith Handley, Traic Markey and Tina Acton (joint entry), Samantha Ledger, Susan Ward, Fahmeda Gill and Jackie Watkins (joint entry), Senai Rupan, all from Dean Row County High School, Wiltshire; Paul Overbaugh, British School in the Netherlands; Nazre Ahmad, Hamilton, White and Carol Webb, all from Park Grove School, Bristol.

Runners up: Nazre Ahmad, Hamilton, White and Carol Webb, all from Park Grove School, Bristol; Alexandra and Albert School, Reigate, Surrey; James Willett, Brine Park School, Gosforth, Hants. £5 book tokens (£2 each for joint entries).

Group Three (16-18) The Future of our Towns and Cities.

First prize: Alan Shipman, Royal Grammar School, Guildford, Surrey. £40, £35 for his school fund.

Second prize: Joseph Wardle, Hatfield High School, Doncaster. £30.

Third prize: Louise Watson, Hatfield High School. £20.

Runners up: Rachel Larkish, Park Grove School, Birmingham; Jonathan Clements, Copley High School, Stalybridge, Cheshire. £5 book tokens.

review

As a new brand of bird hits the market, Liz Heron examines the fluctuating fortunes of Penguin books

A protected species

"The Penguin Books are splendid value for money, so splendid that if the other publishers had any sense they would combine against them and suppress them. It is, of course, a great mistake to imagine that cheap books are good for the book trade."

So wrote George Orwell in his review of the third batch of Penguins to come off the presses, in March 1936. Since then, of course, the rest of the book trade has learned a trick or two from Penguins, and latterly sometimes even beat them at their own original game, though the rules have rather changed over the decades. Cheap books, for one thing, are not what they were. Costs have risen, the recession has bitten, and at the end of the seventies paperback sales took an unprecedented drop.

Penguin's fortunes have been variously documented, not least since the arrival of American publishing executive Peter Mayer to head the company in October 1978 - in what has been seen as a rescue bid, to combat losses and to restore the hegemony that had been lost as other paperback publishers made bigger commercial inroads in the sixties, robbing Penguin of some important authors along the way. Financial pressures persist, but editorial director Peter Carson is now confident that Penguin has regained its lead in the paperback race. He insists that "surprisingly little has changed. I'd say that editorial policy has changed not at all, despite the brouhaha. There have been more changes in the marketplace, so we're possibly more aggressive

in the market."

Marketing is certainly one key to any changes there have been. Penguin's longstanding reputation for solidity and intellectual respectability had made it virtually a national institution, though, as marketing director Patrick Wright was quick to remind me "We're not a national institution, we're a commercial operation."

Peter Mayer's regime brought substantial redundancies (on paper 90 jobs were cut, though the number of people involved was smaller) and last year a planned across-the-board 22 per cent cut in the number of titles. It has also aimed to give the list a more commercial gloss, with greater attention to marketing techniques and intensified promotions. Dummies proliferated, along with competitions and sharply targeted advertising. The increasing number of television and film tie-ins over the years led to the appointment of a manager whose job it is to liaise and put forward ideas for film and television.

A number of lead titles have been heavily promoted. The first major onslaught on the bestseller stakes came with M. M. Kaye's *The Far Pavilions*, a book which some in the trade feel is of greater literary merit than its cover and some critics would suggest, and which, incidentally, was acquired more than a decade before all the hype. Penguin says it paid off, with sales in this country around 231,000. Another big lead fiction title, *The 400*, was less successful, selling 110,000.

According to Peter Carson no comparable single title promotions are planned. Intensified

thematic promotions continue and big promotional efforts, with a launch budget of £40,000, are now being concentrated on King Penguins, a new series designed to give special emphasis to the "literary" novel. If this seems like a change of heart, it would accord with the view that Peter Mayer has mellowed and become more accepting of the difficulties of working within the American mass market mould, and that things are settling down into a traditional style once more.

But King Penguin - whose titles will have a print run of 10,000-35,000 and a cover price of £1.95 upwards - embodies a recognition of the importance of singling out a specific market for "quality" fiction. It's a relatively small market, but its substance is well attested by the success of Picador, and by the output of the smaller "alternative" publishers like Virago and Writers and Readers.

King Penguin certainly has its own lineage in Penguin Modern Classics. However, the new bigger format and logo and the distinctive feel of the series create the special identity that is now so crucial in marketing terms. It's perhaps less adventurous than it may seem. Though the press release says it "will encompass takeovers, rediscoveries and neglected works as well as a new departure - original fiction in paperback", around half of the 20 titles to be published this year are already on the Penguin list, while most of the others are by established authors or have already achieved a measure of critical acclaim. None is an original manuscript: perhaps next year, they say. It is still a welcome initiative, particularly since it can hold out the promise of the kind of experimentation so rare in these days of financial caution.

The series can be seen in an overall context as part of what Patrick Wright calls "rearranging the configuration of the list" and "achieving a definite balance". Alongside it is a growth in "leisure" publishing: books outside the categories of serious fiction and non-fiction. Patrick Wright demurs at the term "downmarket" and explains: "We felt that in the recent past we hadn't published as vigorously as we might, in the field of entertainment, both fiction and non-fiction. We set out to add to our list in general

entertainment." He describes it as "a very deliberate policy of capturing the middle ground."

Coupled with the rearranging, this will have significant effects on the non-fiction side. The Pelican list is to be slimmed down from 800-odd to 400-odd titles, "to reduce the blue wall of bookshops" as one editor puts it. Some titles will be transferred into a Penguin Education list that is to get a promotional lift either this autumn or next spring. There are also intentions to revise Peregrine.

This overall strategy gives credence to suggestions both inside the company and among some former editorial staff that while fiction is being strengthened, non-fiction is being further run down, as a continuation of the process that began with the demise of Penguin Education in 1975. The last two years have seen the departure of a substantial number of senior editorial staff, both through redundancies and in other circumstances. They included a high proportion of non-fiction specialists. Peter Wright, who was in charge of the Pelican list, left in January of this year, and has not been replaced. Where other senior editors have been replaced it has been by staff at a lower grade who have inherited a lesser measure of autonomy. One editor explains simply as the natural run of things in publishing, but a former (redundant) colleague disagrees and sees it as particularly unusual given the extent of unemployment at senior level, and is not alone in feeling that this shift, along with administrative streamlining and the fact that editors now specialise less than they used to, add up to a centralization of editorial control.

It is certainly true that as the shape and packaging of the final product assumes more importance, then the marketing decisions count for more in the overall scheme of things, and it would be naive to imagine that this does not influence what is published. And it is true of the book trade as a whole.

Anyway, Patrick Wright says that Puffins have been increasing their share of the market, thanks to "a more vigorous publishing policy" - hence the revived Puffin Club. Catching them young indeed.

Edward Blisken on Salman Rushdie's new novel

Swallowing the world

Midnight's Children. By Salman Rushdie. Jonathan Cape, £6.95, 224 01823 X.

"To understand just one life, you have to swallow the world." Writing *Midnight's Children* (from which that sentence comes), Mr Rushdie swallows 70 years or so of Indian history, several cities (including substantial parts of Bombay, Delhi and Karachi), a cast of thousands, a vast amount of what might be called practical surrealism, the matter of several melodramas, a bitter, horrifying and haunting view of the war between the Pakistanis ("We saw the intelligentsia... being massacred by the hundreds, but it was not true because it could not have been true"), and very much more. The reader, necessarily stunned, thinks of *Tristram Shandy* ("To me it's a crazy way of telling your life story, if you can't even get to where your father met your mother", says a latterday mistress of Saleem Sinai, who's Mr Rushdie's hero), or *The Tin Drum*, or any other of those novels that grapple with human immensity and multitudinousness through some narrative system that permits the storyteller to gasp, despair, exult, wave wands, throw up his hands, wipe a sweating brow, and be clearly observed in the act of manipulating, enormous narrative burdens.

The essence of this novel is that it is tumultuous to reduce it to a reviewer's outline is to do it great disservice. But it could, hesitatingly be described as the story of one of the thousand and one children born at midnight on August 14, 1947: the exact moment when Indian independence was declared. (The author, one notes, was born just two months earlier). These "midnight's children" have, every one of them, special gifts - mostly magical - and are united, in due course, in the mind of Saleem himself, whose own gift it is to be able to converse with them. In the end, rather little is made of this device: that is, less than one feels the author originally intended to make of

it. Under the Widow, who is Mrs Gandhi, they are (in the region of page 380) rounded up, made incapable: the children of independence, destroyed by a very special child of independence.

But Mr Rushdie is a narrative conjurer of genuine skill: having perhaps failed to make the most of his central scheme, he makes the most of his failure. . . . But to explain this I must say that, for fascinating if peripheral reasons, a servant of the family had swapped Saleem, a few minutes after birth, with another child born at the same hour (sub-plot 37, at a rough calculation): and that the other child is named after the destructive god, Shiva, and grows up into one of the grotesque soldier-heroes of that continent ("Sam, you fought one hell of a war"), much given to impregnating lion-hunting ladies. "So that at this very moment . . . a new generation of children, begotten by midnight's darkest child, was being raised towards the future. Every widow manages to forget something important." One isn't quite sure what midnight's grandchildren will do: but the author clearly hopes that it won't be agreeable to the Widow, by whom he is appalled.

Let me try to distinguish between my various responses to this complex novel. Much of it is marvelously readable, as if some tall story had gone on and brilliantly on. Much of it is of the nature of the tall story, indeed: but a reader who's one of the 500-odd million natives of a relatively peaceful northern island will take the point - that to many of the 500-odd million natives of a wildly imaginative southern continent, the tall story is commonplace, of the order of a daily fact. There is also a great deal of more or less sober realism. You know thoroughly what it's like to grow up in Saleem's corner of Bombay. The novel says about three-quarters of the way through, but it's a perfectly interesting sag. It is philosophically memorable ("Most of what matters in our lives takes place in our absence" - or "if there is a third principle, its name is childhood. But it dies; or rather, it is murdered"). Of the memory of childhood it radiates a great love, together with an immense and somewhat horrified love of India. It provides a striking picture of the worst that British militarism did for the world: which was to inspire comic and murderous. It is much like a first-world display: there are rockets that soar beautifully into the air (like the early scenes in which Saleem's grandfather, a doctor, con-



Salman Rushdie

ducts a love affair through a hole in the chasteest of blankets), and there are subtle that peter out in a jolly way round the reader's puzzled feet. There is constant attractive movement of narrative, especially of overlapping simultaneous events. I felt at the end that I knew, if rather mysteriously, much more about India than when I began: roughly speaking, that something like this was the disorientating hubbub of which E. M. Forster reported the whispers.

arts

Ticket technology

Box offices are undergoing a quiet revolution. Anthony McCall reports

Change comes slowly to the world of the theatre; and as a rule of thumb, the bigger the theatre, the slower the change. Perhaps the most vital area of change, economics, the box office, is currently witnessing a long-overdue revolution. It is becoming computerised, which promises a variety of streamlining effects on both sides of the booking counter.

Not since the mid-eighteenth century have there been any changes to seating plans, for example. Today's box office clerk would quickly recognise the systems in use at say, the Theatre Royal, Bristol of 1774, although admittedly, there might be a few small differences. From earliest times, there was no fixed capacity and seats were unnumbered so good places could only be secured by good arrival, bribery of doorkeepers, or hiring someone to keep your place. Royal edicts were issued in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on admission procedures, only to be dutifully disregarded. Tickets themselves and their earlier counterparts, checks or tokens (in metal, bronze and lead) were sold not only at theatres but at inns and coffee houses. One of the few innovations since then was the introduction of numbered seats in 1858; and counterfoils tickets in 1884.

Perhaps the main reason for the theatre industry's resistance to change is the importance of maintaining traditions. For theatregoing is, by and large, an acquired habit, and since producers are not primarily businessmen but rather creative middlemen whose meter is backing benches, their success relies on intuition, not hard-nosed sales techniques, although these are undoubtedly helpful. A good play will sell itself, in short; and a bad one will flop, whatever sales methods may be applied.

The last few months, however, have seen an increasing number of Britain's leading theatres go over to specially-programmed computer systems to cope with erratic demand and the prickly problems peculiar to this field. Two top regional companies, Manchester's Palace Theatre and the Royal Exchange, were the first to take the plunge. The first local authority was Glasgow, who will be putting its two theatres and concert hall "on line" with

a central computer this summer. The largest-scale systems can take over a dozen terminals connected up to the central memory bank.

Computers have been in wide use among local authorities during the last 20 years, and by now they are proving far less sceptical of modernising their theatres than the fiercely old-fashioned commercial managers. It is an irony, to say the least. The two main computer systems on sale are essentially similar hardware, although BOCs (which stands for Box Office Computer Systems, from Space-Time Systems in London) is the clear market leader over its rival, ICL, which arrived late in the field. Each system provides a more efficient and speedy box office operation, especially with varied repertoires of opera, dance, drama, variety and concerts, on different nights. The best available seats, which can vary according to the attraction, are immediately identified for customers by a pre-programmed schedule that comes up on the computer's visual display unit in the form of a seating plan. The plan also shows seats already booked and can quickly show bookings for days, weeks and months ahead. In addition, tickets may be sold from multiple outlets - at a fraction of the cost of pre-printed tickets.

The National Theatre, for example, orders one million tickets a year. So the cost to 2p saving per ticket, the capital outlay of between £30,000 and £100,000 on a computer system can begin to repay itself from the first night. Waste is also eliminated: each ticket is printed only when a seat is firmly booked.

So much for the theory. As for the practice, it usually turns out that mechanical wizardry goes wrong at one time or other. For theatre managers, this spectacle is an understandable nightmare, for the results would be swift and irreparable. Performances might have to be cancelled, involving ticket refunds or alternative bookings - a headache at the best of times. Apart from lost revenue in an increasingly risky business climate, there are other spectral shapes like tetchy stars and possible bad press. The gloomy vision is not dispelled by assurances that such breakdowns are very rare.

But the mood among managements,

although largely one of let's-wait-and-see, is nevertheless tempered by an acceptance of new technology, in contrast to 10 years ago. Now they realise it is here to stay. Indeed soundings show that the next 12 months are likely to see a speeding up in the switch to automation. And big centres like the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, the vast new Barbican Arts Centre (opening next autumn) and the Royal Festival Hall complex, will do a lot to influence the mood by their decisions.

For managements, there are several less obvious advantages to computerization like real improvements in accounting and in sophisticated marketing opportunities. And for the public, the prospect of box office queues is slowly becoming a thing of the past. For already there is discussion about providing booking outlets in every conceivable metropolitan and neighbourhood centre: underground stations, supermarkets, hotels and even local libraries. Best of all is the news that in time, a link with Prestel, Cefax and Oracle on our television sets could bring ticket-buying into the living room. Seat availability is already given by the RSC on this basis; the credit card is returned, the account debited, and the tickets issued from dispenser, rather in the manner of those 24-hour cash dispenser units at certain banks. The service would be available for all types of event from the Cup Final at Wembley to the Last Night of the Proms.

So far, Britain is the first country to pioneer the concept in any detail. Enquiries from abroad arrive at nearly the same rate as from the home market. One idea from the Concertgebouw concert hall in Amsterdam suggested a worldwide computerized booking network allowing international exchange of information and bookings up to a year ahead.

Perhaps the next step is to adopt the concept of buying time on large computer, a practice already well tested by industries and professional organizations. This would avoid undue financial risk by the smaller arts bodies like recital halls, fringe theatres and specialist events, which provide for minority tastes.

The power without the glory

John James on a brave shot at Racine in English

Britannicus. By Jean Baptiste Racine. Lyric Studio, Hammersmith.

It was March 1960, the Savoy Theatre, the Compagnie Marie Bell and Racine's *Britannicus*. Marie Bell had caused a stir before, even opening her short and, as it proved, astonishingly successful London season. She had refused to play with an interval, protesting that she could not suddenly stop in mid-flight while the audience went off to the bars. So she had sat uninterrupted through the acts of the tragedy. After the words had been spoken, Mme. Bell walked onstage: centre: the ruler of the Roman Empire, the emperor Nero. The audience sat spellbound as that, suspended stillness, which is the theatre's finest tribute to its great art. It was an unforgettable experience.

For the part of the pleasure of that season of Racine's tragedy had been the delightful first discovery of a master playwright whose profound insight into the human condition transcended barriers of race and language. Another excitement was to speak with clarity and care. So much so that when attention flags, as it does occasionally with John. Catherine's lumbering blank verse, one is aware of formal articulation and vocal colour. Perhaps that is deliberate - designed to distance - as are the variations of contemporary dress the actors wear.

The story concerns the emperor Nero "in the process of becoming a monster" (Racine). Agrippina, his mother, snarls under her loss of imperial power. Her imperious attacks drive Nero to the crimes that will establish his supremacy and, ironically, start him on the road to bloody tyranny which will encompass

matricide. Nothing unseemly happens on stage. Murder and not off-stage are given, powerful descriptions in the mouths of Burrus, Nero's mentor, and Albinus, Agrippina's confidante. All the pain and passion is verbalised; characterisation and action are subservient to words. And there's the rub.

Stripped of the sonorities, the echoing rhymes and varying pulse of Racine's original, the tragedy is diminished. Another language carries with it a different aesthetic. The attention shifts from the universals to particulars: Racine's medium, and message, are inseparable. What we get is the power without the glory.

Nevertheless, it is not to be sniffed at. Stobhan McKenna acts grandly with admirable vocal range and fire. Jonathan Kent's frenzied Nero owes more to Tacitus and later historians than to Racine. Alan MacNaughton makes Burrus an honourable (if not a soldier-gentleman, while Donald Shaw's young lovers Britannicus and Junia are played with spirit by Gary Cooper and Elizabeth Richardson; his dance between Acts four and five is a mistake. Valerie Sagrut rivets attention in Albinus's Messenger-speech. The bloody-handed guard dragging garbage sacks at the close is mere director's dressing. *Britannicus* is a bold, brave choice, and the rare chance to see it attempted at all in English is to be unreservedly welcomed.



Sunset in the long drawing-room at Chesney Wold, as seen by Phil

Tea at Chesney Wold

Lynne Truss goes on a pilgrimage

When I asked the organizer how I would recognize the Rockingham Castle coach party he advised me to look for "people who looked interested in Dickens". Tricky. I know plenty of people interested in Dickens but have never been able quite to pinpoint precisely what it is they have in common that would distinguish them from, say, all the other people waiting for coaches on the Embankment. I suppose I had surprised him by asking, since the members of the Dickens Fellowship tend to know one another. But my friend and I are new members, and apart from walking up and down the Embankment loudly declaring "I never will desert Mr Micawber" we hardly knew how to identify ourselves to our fellow uncommercial travellers.

As it happened, a process of elimination found us in the right coach with the right party speeding off to (though not, as it ultimately transpired, towards) Rockingham Castle in Northants, a house significant to our calling not only because Dickens stayed there, but because he used elements of it for Chesney Wold in *Bleak House*. On the long, idle tour of East Anglia that ensued (the driver insisting, for our reassurance, that he didn't mind getting lost, being accustomed to spending long periods in a coach) my friend and I comforted ourselves about the inclement weather by considering how essential to an appreciation of Chesney Wold was a good miserable rainfall, providing the drip, drip, drip on the Ghost's Walk.

Literary detective work is an unwelcome pastime in relation to Dickens. When he used precise locations he normally told his reader precisely where they were, and when he modelled characters on real people, the real people made such a fuss that everyone knew about it. The *Pall Mall Gazette* of July 1896 gives most of the locations for *Bleak House*, including Mr Tulkinghorn's house at 58, Lincoln's Inn Fields (the real residence of Dickens's friend and biographer John Forster) and Mr Krook's shop in Chichester. Rents, off Chancery Lane. It refuses to identify Rockingham Castle with Chesney Wold on the grounds that they are, for a start, in different counties (Chesney

Wold is in Lincolnshire) but quotes a letter from Dickens to the lady of the house, Mrs Richard Watson, where he says that he used "many bits, chiefly about trees and shadows, from observations made at Rockingham". The *Gazette* describes the similarities between the real and fictional drawing rooms and terrace walks.

The most outstanding feature about the castle, apart from its being much further away than it ought to be, turned out to be a marvellous topiary, representing a number of elephants falling over one another. The most interesting feature of the house was that the guide who showed it to us, although aware that we were only there because of our consuming interest in one aspect of its history, mentioned Dickens only once or twice, and then in the places where she usually did so. There were a few Dickensian exhibits, including an early edition of *Bleak House* open at Phil's illustration of "Sunset in the long drawing-room at Chesney Wold" which clearly depicts the room in which it was displayed. What was even more interesting than the guide not mentioning Dickens very much was that none of us asked about Dickens at all, and apart from between my friend and myself who talked of nothing else, his name was hardly to be heard all day. Indeed, I got the distinct impression that to bring him up would be considered rather poor taste, to transgress against decorum - to be, in short, vulgar. At tea someone started to mention Harold Skimpole, but thinking better of it bit his lip and Changed the Subject.

But if there wasn't the bandying about of quotations and page references I had so unromantically expected, there was a distinctive good humour about everyone's attitude to the day and an evident enjoyment of the ludicrous that meant that Dickens did have some influence on us, even if we didn't like to talk about it. As we motored back to London by a more direct route (there is a limit even to a coach driver's patience for mistaking himself) my friend and I reflected that if the day had not taught us much about Dickens, it had given us some clues on how in future to recognize Dickensians.

Statuesque

Prince Albert's statue in Holborn Circus is "the poorest statue in London", doffing, as it does, its hat. Thus says Arthur Byron in *London Statues: a Guide to London Statues and Sculpture* (Constable, £5.95) which is a thorough inventory of every variety of monument within a huge area of the city: statues, sculptures, memorials, busts, obelisks and war memorials. It also contains a chapter on sculptors, and is well illustrated.

For each monument in the above categories, there is documentation of site, material, sculptor and date of erection. The sections on statues and

sculptures are accompanied by maps, and each chapter gives a history and description of every monument within its compass.

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arts



Girls from St Ursula's School, Greenwich under expert instruction

Dance for all

Peter Brinson on some new student efforts

In a week which saw representatives of the entire private sector of dance and drama teaching go in deputation to Mark Carls' over the issue of grants for vocational training, it is splendid to report a range of excellent student dancing from primary to undergraduate level. Most of it took place at Sadler's Wells Theatre where the ILEA presented The Dance of London Children through-out the week. This included junior school workshops every morning; a workshop for handicapped children; dance classes for secondary schools every afternoon; and four evening performances of work by school and youth dance groups from all over London. The climax on Saturday was a full evening performance by London Youth Dance Theatre.

Besides this was a chance to see the Rambert Academy's dance students in their final year of training. In a series of open performances of final work by the Laban Centre's third year BA dance students at its studio theatre in New Cross.

The Rambert Academy's performance was part of an evening organised by the West London Institute of Higher Education, the Academy's

doted form in mostly well-constructed pieces reflecting the course's emphasis on craft. The reflection suggests, however, the influence of the broad dance studies required at BA Honours level. It is difficult to define this influence precisely but it is clear, for example, in the range of themes. For me at least the experience demonstrates again the need for would-be choreographers to acquire a broader background of intellectual resource than can usually be obtained through an exclusively vocational dance training.

Background was reflected in a different way through the dance pieces shown at Sadler's Wells Theatre. Mostly, these were the result of collaboration between students and teachers working in schools as part of curriculum studies or in dance clubs out of school. The themes and popular music frequently chosen provided remarkable commentary on teenage life today — streets, houses, relationships, violence, as well as hitting some significant targets such as "sex". The best of the work, particularly at primary level, was usually where the teacher had succeeded in opening the way for the children's own ideas to be danced without too much adult guidance. At secondary as well as primary level the week showed, too, the remarkable development which dance in London schools has achieved during the last ten years. It is an achievement, ILEA's responsible staff inspector, Joan McLaren, wrote in the programme "largely due to the enthusiasm and inspiration of the teachers." Embracing all colours of both sexes in equal measure one can see the achievement particularly in rising standards of dance technique by secondary students. The opportunity to experience a stage and theatre such as Sadler's Wells thus becomes doubly valuable through the timeliness of the initiative. It could not have succeeded so well, however, without the collaboration of the theatre staff, especially the stage staff, demonstrating that professional standards can transform an educational experiment into something memorable for audiences as well as performers. On this showing the experiment needs to become a regular event, linked ultimately, perhaps, with the National Festival of the Arts. Such a thought suggests its withdrawal of support from advanced elements of youth performance. Performance at national level is a next step.

home, to show off its choir and orchestra with the dancers. The result showed high standards of music and dance, but rather more variable achievement by the choir. There was nothing variable, though, about the final item, a performance of Christopher Bruce's *Dancing Day* in which the dancers appeared against a background of singers, tenor and solo violin in a wonderfully original arrangement which made even the Commonwealth Institute's dreary stage seem briefly elegant. When Bruce created this beautiful ballet for the students last January it was danced to a recorded version of Holst's songs. Live performance danced it into better balance, besides providing a memorable way to launch six young dancers into professional life at the end of their two year course. Lucky people in Bristol can see the same dancers with live music at the Theatre Royal, Down in South London the Laban Centre's second BA Honours dance course is also coming to an end. Part of the course has to be the creation of original choreography by each student. This is a good year with several pieces and performances which could be useful professionally. They explore only the short story or anecdotal form in mostly well-constructed pieces reflecting the course's emphasis on craft. The reflection suggests, however, the influence of the broad dance studies required at BA Honours level. It is difficult to define this influence precisely but it is clear, for example, in the range of themes. For me at least the experience demonstrates again the need for would-be choreographers to acquire a broader background of intellectual resource than can usually be obtained through an exclusively vocational dance training.

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Theatre and education

Healthy minds and bodies

Fitness Wins. The Royal Court Activists Youth Theatre. **The Beggar's Opera.** The Old Vic Youth Theatre. **The White Devil.** The Cockpit Theatre Company.

Dubbed in my youth a physical illiterate, and with a lifelong aversion to cold showers, I found my deepest prejudices confirmed in every scene of *Fitness Wins*. Jamie Reid's new play, presented by the Royal Court's Activists Youth Theatre, painted an awful picture of the dangers inherent in clean living.

Despite its rambling length and a general lack of polish, it evoked all too painfully memories of the PT. I thought I had escaped on leaving school. In scene after scene (and there were a great many of them, each necessitating a change of props) a hard-working cast tried to do for PT what David Storey's *The Changing Room* did for Rugby League. Their hearty, butch all-boys-togetherness was bad enough, but the active of a new instructor, a gaunter, in a tracksuit, was more than flesh could stand. Under his tutelage compulsory circuit-training took over from larky changing-room chats, and all the time went out of the joke — for audiences as well as swagbats. But that was the point of the play. Behind the press-up, something sinister was happening. In the words of a programme note, our notions of Healthy Minds and Healthy Bodies were being confronted. As John James has already hinted, *The Old Vic Youth Theatre's Beggar's Opera* was a little gem. Directed by Valerie Colgan brought John Gay's gallery of the eighteenth-century underworld vividly to life; her cast of thieves, murderers, highwaymen and whores ably demonstrating how much more theatrically effective vice can be than clean-living virtue. Onstage throughout, they remained consistently in character, selves stupid, in the gloomy upstage tavern they frequented when not actually speaking. I particularly liked the drawing daintiness of the Ladies of the Town. Dolly Trull, Mrs Siam, Sucky Tawdry and the rest lived up to every syllable of their names — even if Claudette Russell-Cowan's blowy, Moma Peschum beat them all hands down. Among the other principal players, Harold Horwita as Machbeth, the highwayman and Judy Adams as Lucy, coarse and cooing by turns, skillfully managed to put across Gay's frankly undistinguished lyrics with affection and pathos. (It was a pity, however, that they did not then pause to acknowledge the applause their efforts produced.) An ingenious set, festooned with umbrellas and resembling nothing so much as London Transport's left luggage office, as well as an outrageous costume, on-stage band of two (piano and cello) added to the enjoyment of this lively, gaily produced, final fling at the Old Vic which might encourage more youth groups to look afresh at Gay and, other, professionally neglected, eighteenth-century writers.

For more commonly revived, by both professional and amateur companies, are the plays of Shakespeare — contemporaries, the Jacobean also-rans, John Webster's

Duchess of Malfi and *White Devil* being especially well-served. Although not offering any startling new insights into the play (nothing that might persuasively claim, miming Flaminio), John Willes' visually stunning production of *The White Devil* at the Cockpit Theatre in Marylebone at least cut a clear path through the labyrinthine complexities of the plot. With a work in which everyone is seemingly related to, sleeping with or out to murder everyone else, this in itself was no mean achievement.

Taming such a melodramatic tale so that it fitted the intimate confines of the ILEA's studio theatre proved more of a problem. Grand passions are not easy to scale down, and several of the actors succumbed to the temptation to rant. With sections of the audience not ten feet away, such grand gestures effectively alienated them from the action. Despite this, the major success of the Cockpit's production was in persuading us at least to think about the motives for that villainy. Can Webster's monsters be wholly bad? Despicable though we knew him to be, on one level it was still easy to be guided by the whispered sincerity of Flaminio (Mark Poord in the performance I saw), and even Vittoria (Deborah Smith) assumed a chilling pathos in her speech to the Court. The resulting moral confusion was much to the taste of the audience. Unable to resist any villain's rebuke, they happily resorted to hissing anyone who came on stage. As mad as Shakespeare's contemporaries, the Jacobean also-rans, John Webster's

despite its rambling length and a general lack of polish, it evoked all too painfully memories of the PT. I thought I had escaped on leaving school. In scene after scene (and there were a great many of them, each necessitating a change of props) a hard-working cast tried to do for PT what David Storey's *The Changing Room* did for Rugby League. Their hearty, butch all-boys-togetherness was bad enough, but the active of a new instructor, a gaunter, in a tracksuit, was more than flesh could stand. Under his tutelage compulsory circuit-training took over from larky changing-room chats, and all the time went out of the joke — for audiences as well as swagbats. But that was the point of the play. Behind the press-up, something sinister was happening. In the words of a programme note, our notions of Healthy Minds and Healthy Bodies were being confronted. As John James has already hinted, *The Old Vic Youth Theatre's Beggar's Opera* was a little gem. Directed by Valerie Colgan brought John Gay's gallery of the eighteenth-century underworld vividly to life; her cast of thieves, murderers, highwaymen and whores ably demonstrating how much more theatrically effective vice can be than clean-living virtue. Onstage throughout, they remained consistently in character, selves stupid, in the gloomy upstage tavern they frequented when not actually speaking. I particularly liked the drawing daintiness of the Ladies of the Town. Dolly Trull, Mrs Siam, Sucky Tawdry and the rest lived up to every syllable of their names — even if Claudette Russell-Cowan's blowy, Moma Peschum beat them all hands down. Among the other principal players, Harold Horwita as Machbeth, the highwayman and Judy Adams as Lucy, coarse and cooing by turns, skillfully managed to put across Gay's frankly undistinguished lyrics with affection and pathos. (It was a pity, however, that they did not then pause to acknowledge the applause their efforts produced.) An ingenious set, festooned with umbrellas and resembling nothing so much as London Transport's left luggage office, as well as an outrageous costume, on-stage band of two (piano and cello) added to the enjoyment of this lively, gaily produced, final fling at the Old Vic which might encourage more youth groups to look afresh at Gay and, other, professionally neglected, eighteenth-century writers.

Bun-faced ladies?

For God's Sake Care. ATV.

Funny how the same idea crops up at the same time in different places: ATV's programme this week about the Salvation Army, *For God's Sake Care*, bears some striking similarities to *Nationwide*'s recent series on dossers' hostels in London. Both exercises involved their reporters' disguising themselves as down and outs, both amounted to devastating indictments of the way the hostels are run, and both have led to immediate, if limited, improvements in the situation.

Whereas Tony Wilkinson encompassed the whole gamut of London institutions designed to help dossers, ATV's David Jones scoured the country sampling no fewer than 27 of the Army's hostels. Only four let him in for nothing, and the rest behaved with varying degrees of mean-mindedness. The ex-officers he subsequently interviewed waxed eloquent about the inherent inhumanity of the system, and about the consequences of the hostels' need to break even.

Jones's interview with the Army's head of social services, who looked embarrassed and unhappy, suggested that the real fault lay in the organization's structure. Most of the money donated to the Army goes to its evangelism, with a very much smaller amount going to help the needy. Members of the public who have regularly forked out in response to those smiling, bun-faced ladies

may well feel that they have been misled. People who have donated food and clothes will probably feel even less happy on learning that their donations have actually been sold to the wretches who can least afford them.

For God's Sake Care was a cruel piece of reporting, simple, direct and to the point. *Nationwide*'s was frankly melodramatic, with a lot of arty photography and a trendy, sure tune. Wilkinson must be given his due, however: he went back to make a follow-up programme recently and got beaten up by one of the men he had helped expose.

His exploits are also chronicled in a book: *Down and Out* (Quartet £2.50, 0 7043 3366 X), which should make thought-provoking reading to anyone concerned with the way and dangerous world into which they arrive in the capital with nothing but work nor lodgings to rely on.

Wilkinson's account may be a bit breathless and anecdotal but it provides a useful complement to another, more statistical, recent book: *The Survivors*, by Brandon Wells, Francis and Ramsay (Routledge, 0 7100 0468 0). This is a study based on in-depth interviews with 107 "newcomers" who were selected from two night-shelters and a government reception centre, and it examines the official responses they encountered as well as the way the media tend to exploit their plight full circle. Michael Church

Radio

Song of the real folk

Radio Four must be congratulated on bringing the work of Charles Parker to a new generation of listeners by broadcasting two of his "Radio Ballads" on successive Wednesday evenings. Though both programmes were made more than 20 years ago, they dominated the schedules by the brilliance of their artistry and left one wondering whether the medium's potential is being anything like fully exploited.

The first, *The Ballad of John Axon* (May 13), was like its companion piece *Singing the Fishing*, the result of collaboration between Parker and folk-singing Ewan MacColl, with musical direction by Peggy Seeger. Yet the memory is haunted by the voices of those "real", honest, non-Equity speakers whose story was channelled through Parker's editing and MacColl's songs.

John Axon was the engine-driver who died when he stayed on the footplate of his runaway train in the Peak District in 1957. Like the traditional ballads, the piece was essentially a narrative, and yet within this narrative — a constant interweaving of music, song and the words of John Axon's colleagues and wife — the listener was drawn into a sympathetic and profoundly moving account by working people of their personal relationships, their work and what it meant to them. Freed from the studio by the (then) novelty of a portable tape recorder, Parker

found inspiration in the informality and spontaneity of those who had been at the heart of an event, not the oral tradition was still the best, in contrast, *Singing the Fishing* had no strictly narrative structure, it was a kaleidoscope of reminiscences, documentary and song on the work and life of herring fishermen and their families in this century. Details of the cycle of boom and slump, the desperate hard work of the men and women (who gutted fish and mended nets), the constant dangers and the hard beauty some found in the challenging environment flowed from the speakers, as if without prompting. (And who can how much there was? The result was right).

But to the question which still gnaws: should "The Radio Ballads" have heralded a revolution in the medium, or were they the best examples of a form created by Parker, and therefore quite unique? Certainly, the increasing number of local radio stations managers should find in Parker's work an incentive to exploit the obvious resources in their catchment areas. But there is clearly not a total absence of inventiveness in radio production today — even if the current best example is a much less serious programme of unashamed literary origin. I recommend the serialisation of *Call Comfort Farm* (Radio Four, 9.05 pm, Sundays; 3.02 pm, Tuesdays).

John Mair

Lingo

It's not that the British are negative by nature. We can be pretty positive actually. Odd, then, that so many words survive only in their negative form. It must be something to do with that legendary love of understatement. Why is no-one ever gainly or corrigible? Why is the occidental never scrutable and only rarely willing? One can be enchanted, but not illuminated and if one should not expect the maculate person to be count, why should he not be chalan? And does need more than a consonicance there in which to make up his mind whether or not he is grunted?

Latin America: Political Culture and Development. By Russell H. Fitzgibbon & Julio A. Fernandez. Prentice Hall £8.40.

European books on Latin America published before the mid-sixties were characterised by facile travelogues which stressed the exotic, dreary geographies which ignored most social factors and rubbishy histories which strained credence to put Latin America into a fascist or Cold War context. Fitzgibbon and Fernandez reflect the revolution that has taken place since they give far more detail and social insight, and a properly sceptical of the real impact of the constitutions

they describe. Unhappily they do not chance their arms enough in comparing the effectiveness of the dramatically varied development styles now being employed in the region. But this is a useful introduction. P. J.

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Marbles, statues and butterflies

F. W. Kellaway on the history of the Natural History Museum

The Natural History Museum at South Kensington. By W. T. Stearn. Heinemann £15.00. 434 736007.

The British Museum (Natural History). By P. Whitehead and Colin Keates. Philip Wilson £4.95 0 85667 108 8 £7.95. 1096.

The Natural History Museum. British Museum 60p. 0 565 00798 X.

Nature Stored Nature Studied. British Museum £1.75 0 565 00835 8.

Alfred Waterhouse and the Natural History Museum. By M. G. Howard. Yale £4.75 0 300 02578 5. £1.75 for the museum.

The Founders of Science at the British Museum 1753-1900. By A. W. Gunther. Halesworth Press £7.90. 0 95072760 1.

The Natural History Museum is celebrating the centenary of its establishment in South Kensington, London. About halfway through its journey there, it was my schoolboy delight on each bi-annual visit to London to spend at least one day in the museum and its neighbours.

The excitement and pleasures of those days were the foundation of a lifelong interest in flora and fauna. So, without doubt, it has been for many thousands of other youngsters whose education was enriched by the experience. Children have flocked to the museums throughout the century, and not least in the postwar years. Their elders have been there in increasingly great numbers also, so that currently the annual total of visitors at the Natural History Museum is round the three million mark.

To start at the beginning, the commonly used name for the museum is technically incorrect. Strictly, the in-

stitution is the British Museum (Natural History). It derives from the Department of Artificial and Natural productions, formed in 1756 as part of the museum created at Montagu House, Bloomsbury, with the Hans Sloane collection as a nucleus.

A major history, by Professor Stearn, now issued in conjunction with the museum, is complemented by a sumptuously illustrated volume in which a text by Peter Whitehead and photographs by Colin Keates harmonise to present a conspectus and souvenir of great value and appeal.

The museum also issues a popular guide and, among a number of somewhat more specialised works, a exhibition. *Nature Stored and Nature Studied*, an account of the collections, conservation and research carried out in the establishment. There is also, again with illustrations of the highest class, an architectural story, by Mary G. Howard, describing the work of Alfred Waterhouse, which recalls the origins of the Kensington building. For the Bloomsbury site was soon overcrowded, although some temporary alleviation resulted from the transfer of all the various collections from Montagu House (itself demolished in 1849) to a new British Museum building which had been erected on an adjacent site.

Earlier Robert Peel had founded the British Museum, with its "marbles, statues, butterflies, manuscripts, books and pictures" as a "farrago that distracts attention". Arguments such as these were powerfully advanced by a lobby favouring the separation of the natural history departments. Protagonist-in-chief was Richard Owen, who had been appointed as Superintendent of the department in 1856. With the backing of Gladstone, his ideas were accepted in principle, and planning

for a move to south Kensington began. The complex manœuvres and the advances and setbacks fill many fascinating pages of the histories. This bald summary must move to the eventual selection of Waterhouse as executive architect for the new building.

Professor Girouard, in his elegant, lively style, explains the politics that bedevilled the project, the qualities of the design and especially of the detail, and the ways in which the distinctive decoration, the structure and the services were planned and incorporated.

An aerial photograph shows "the four towers and cathedral centre of the museum" and the way in which the towers, those of the Imperial Institute and the Royal College of Music, the dome of the Albert Hall and the spire of the Albert Memorial "are all neatly lined up with each other". In fact the siting is along the central axis of what was the Royal Horticultural Society's garden, a piece of almost forgotten history now recalled.

A similar photograph is in the Whitehead/Keates book, where the colour plates vividly record the variety and immensity of the collections. There is a delightful depiction, too, of the Children's Centre where microscopes and specimens are available and guided trails around the buildings start, while portraits of some of those associated with the museum, with Sloane, John Edward Gray and, of course, Owen prominently, accompany a picture of Darwin's statue to revive some of the more vehement controversies.

Details of these are comprehensively included in Professor Stearn's work, which it is safe to forecast, will become regarded as the definitive record. The former Senior Principal Scientific Officer at the museum has had access to unofficial. His deeply researched text moves

smoothly from the Bloomsbury years, covering the move to South Kensington and the advances before 1914, between the wars, and after 1945, to what he describes as an era of change and independence, 1950 to 1980.

Here then is the authoritative saga of the clashes at Bloomsbury, especially following the appointment of Richard Owen and that of Antonio Panizzi, the Principal Librarian in charge of the whole British Museum. Owen's philosophy concerning the arrangement and display of materials, his skill in identification and his urge for a separate building all culminated in the move across London. "I love Bloomsbury, but I love five acres more" he is quoted as saying, for space was the essence. Even so, the whole of the planned building was never erected, but the new opportunities (with keepers of the calibre of Gunther in zoology, Fleicher in mineralogy and Woodward in geology) were seized.

On Owen's retirement in 1883, W. H. Flower became Superintendent, at a time when E. A. Bond was in charge of the whole British Museum. Their relationships were amicable, in marked contrast to those of their successors E. Ray Lankester and E. Maunde Thompson. Growth continued, but so did dissension; the seeds were sown for the eventual creation, decades later, of a separate body of Trustees for the Natural History Museum with all that meant in terms of financial control, determination of policy and staff status.

An Act of 1930 had made the Director at South Kensington independent of his fellows at Bloomsbury. Their relationships were virtually autonomous, but it took until 1963 for another British Museum Act to establish full independence. Meanwhile there had been wars, important accessions, a succession of Directors and an extension of functions until the museum achieved its present eminence and versatility. The modern leaders have fitting tributes paid to them, for they are estimable members of the dynasty. The personalities appear again.

sometimes with different emphasis, in a work by Dr A. E. Gunther, grandson of Albert Gunther. Primarily concerned with the lives and achievements of the people who had significantly influenced the development of the museum, it portrays their attitudes and jealousies, the behind-the-scenes moves, and the relationships of the growth of science with politics and national happenings.

All these narratives are especially relevant now, not only because of the centenary, but also since this is a time when the place of science in education, and the impact of science on the national scene, are yet once more under critical scrutiny. The quality and character of the museum as major factors in education have always been accepted; they are vital today.

It is therefore fitting to end with a reprise of my inferences about the educational significance of the museum and its work. The national collections of animals, plants, fossils, and minerals are available for reference and research. The major task of taxonomy (the identification and classification of living organisms, fossils and minerals) systematises and enlarges man's knowledge. Advice and information is freely available to schools, with much vital material regularly disseminated in various grades of publications.

Above all, the museum is open for general edification and enjoyment. It is a mecca for school parties, not only from London but on visits from all over the country. The recent redevelopment of public galleries had as a main aim "the design of exhibitions where people of all ages could go and enjoy learning about natural history", a series of displays showing the diversity of the natural world and explaining some of the underlying principles of biology.

Such aims are being worthily fulfilled; the use of the museum can be further enhanced by a shelf of books on which those listed above are among the most prominent.

Origin of Species

BRITISH MUSEUM (Natural History)

Published to accompany the important centenary exhibition of the same name at the British Museum (Natural History) this lively and informal book packed with colourful illustrations provides a unique introduction to evolution for the student and general reader. Hard covers £12.00 net. Paperback £3.95 net.

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General Editor: P. H. GREENWOOD

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Celia Green

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Institute of Psychophysical Research, Oxford

The life of a pariah

Myra Barrs on governesses in England

Suffer and be Still.
The Wideningsphere.
Edited by Martha Vicinus.
Methuen £4.95 each.

The Victorian governess was a frequent topic of conversation, the subject of countless newspaper articles, a standard figure in fiction, and a charitable cause. In *Suffer and be Still*, a collection of papers in feminist history edited by Martha Vicinus, and originally published in America in 1972, M. Jeanne Peterson accounts for the obsessive interest that Victorians appear to have taken in the fate of the governess. One reason why she attracted so much attention was because she was a paradox: a lady who worked. Men of the "leisure classes" often worked, but wives and daughters stayed at home, symbols of the male economic power that was supporting them. If ever that support gave way, if ever a lady had to earn her living, the only way she could do so and remain a lady was as a governess.

Throughout this book and its companion volume, *The Wideningsphere*, one can trace the fortunes of the governess. One paper quotes Edward Carpenter's description of how his father, with six unmarried daughters to support, never once contemplated educating them for a profession:

"Occasionally it happened that, after a restless night of anxiety over some failure among his investments, and dread lest he should not be able at his death to leave the girls a competent income, he would come down to breakfast looking a picture of misery. After a time he would break

out, 'Ruin impended over the family', securities were falling, dividends disappearing; there was only one conclusion - the girls would have to go out as governesses'. Then silence and gloom would descend upon the household."

To become a governess was, in Carpenter's words, "to become a pariah". Her position in a household was a highly ambiguous one. A contemporary observer noted:

"The real discomfort of a governess's position in a private family arises from the fact that it is undefined. She is not a relation, not a guest, not a mistress, not a servant - but something made up of all. No one knows exactly how to treat her."

It was perhaps this very ambiguity which explains why governesses became interesting figures in fiction; their marginal status in a household could be exploited for the purposes of a narrative. A. James Hammer, writing about "Feminism and Female Emigration 1861-1886", finds that English governesses who emigrated to Australia had a much more secure position in households there. English class feeling and social discrimination were largely left behind and one governess wrote:

"Where I in the position of the third or fourth rate Governess... I would unhesitatingly become a domestic servant in Australia in preference... Servants are more considered, there is more freedom and independence here than at home."

The "Female Middle Class Emigration Society" which helped these women to emigrate was a feminist

organization, operating at a time when emigration was a controversial issue among feminists. Emigration was also an *unfeminist* solution to the problem of "redundant women"; it was felt to be a way of providing wages for surplus men in the colonies. For some women emigration seemed the only route to respectable paid employment.

It was mainly middle class women who were kept out of employment. That they were kept out, prevented from entry to the professions, for instance, by the reluctance of the older universities to award degrees to women, is clear from Rita McWilliams Tullberg's paper on "Women and Degrees at Cambridge University". Most unmarried working-class women, on the other hand, went out to work, though their earnings were low, and Peter Stearns's paper on "Working Class Women in Britain 1890-1914" reports an increasing number of strikes against women workers in a wide range of industries in the early 1900s.

Despite the fact that in 1851 there were 25,000 governesses in England compared with 750,000 domestic servants, there was much more public interest at the time, and has been much more feminist interest since, in the position of middle class women. These collections do not do much to correct the balance. Helene Roberts's paper on "Women in Victorian Art", for instance, can cite few paintings of working class women (or any paintings of urban poverty) for obvious reasons. "It is not the office of Art to present us with an offensive kind" stated the *Art Journal*. Poverty was only acceptable if it was rural, and cottage interiors were a popular subject.

Women were often portrayed in bourgeois domestic scenes.

Though Millais thought that the women in Titian, Raphael and Rembrandt paintings were "magnificent as works of art", he added "Who would care to kiss such women?" Patriarchal attitudes are well documented in these pages.

The ultimate characterization of women as passive, idealized, kissable creatures, different in kind from active, worldly males came in Ruskin's classic and irrational speech "Of Queen's Gardens", and Kate Millett's analysis of that is included here.

Geddes, the biologist who is the subject of Jill Conway's essay on "Victorian Theories of Sexual Evolution" asserted that the same characteristics were true at cell level. "The quiescent well-fed one becomes an ovum", he decided. On this scientific basis he argued that the agitation for the equality of the sexes was pointless: "What was decided among the prehistoric Protozoa cannot be annulled by act of parliament."

Among the most useful items in these useful volumes are Barbara Kanner's two select bibliographies which list primary and secondary sources under headings like "Sickness and Health Care" and "Organizations". Kanner points to the "fairly widespread neglect" of women's experience in social history and quotes the opinion that "many unfamiliar aspects of nineteenth century society spring to view" when historians focus on this question. The papers in these books entirely support this judgement.

Myra Barrs

Full Marx

Karl Marx. By Allen W. Wood.
Routledge and Kegan Paul £13.50.
7100 0672 1.

Surprisingly few of the products of the Marx industry focus directly on philosophical issues, although almost all refer to them in passing. Given that Marx worked as an economist and a historian as well as a philosopher - and much of his work is an amalgam of the three disciplines - experts in any one field is immense. Allen Wood has attempted a somewhat belated brush-clearing job to see how far Marx's ideas are vulnerable to specifically philosophical attack. His conclusion is that they are not, either because Marx's philosophical statements are irrelevant to his overall theory or because most of the criticisms so far levelled against him simply misunderstand what he meant.

The trouble is that no agreement exists about what Marx meant or even about which bits of what he said should be taken seriously or as definitive. Professor Wood provides an answer structured around five themes: alienation, historical materialism, moral theory, materialism and dialectics. Of these, only the third, moral theory, is unusual although current interpretive fashion tends to omit dialectics as something Marx wrote about too little for us to understand and/or which is unnecessary to grasp the rest of his work.

Professor Wood's interpretation views the economic theory of *Capital* as the central force of Marx's work. The argument he presents is readable, stimulating and often original. One fault is occasional carelessness: for example a quotation from Marx about natural science is used to support a Wood proposition about Marx's view of nature.

Carl Serly

Presenting the past

Geoffrey Trease on history for middle and lower secondary schools

History Scene 2. By Peter Moss.
Hart-Davis Educational. £2.25
247 12764 9
Castles and Crusaders 1100-1400. By Michael Pollard.
Blackie £2.75
216 90733 0
The Tudors. By Jon Nichol.
Basil Blackwell £1.95
093 93370 0
The Elizabethans. By Fiona Reynolds.
Heinemann Educational £2.25
435 31730 X

The delightful humour and gusto of Ray Fishwick's line drawings should not be allowed to obscure the other merits of Peter Moss's lively account of the Middle Ages. His own text, brief and simply phrased, is full of interesting information and comprehensible explanation: how people lived, what happened, how state and church were run, and what people thought about this life and the next. The drawings, often comic but never facetious, hammer home the main points so that they are more likely to stick in the youthful, not specially academic, mind. They are supplemented with a fair number of more conventionally "serious" illustrations from contemporary sources and modern photographs.

Castles and Crusaders is a misleading title, since Michael Pollard covers

many of the same topics, like schooling and apprenticeship, Wat Tyler and the Black Death, handled by Mr Moss. To bring the past to life his preferred method is didactic fiction. Imaginary characters, a peasant woman or a Banockburn survivor, describe their experiences, falling into anachronisms and modern comparisons. Some teachers may think this kind of thing is better done by real novelists such as Rosemary Sutcliffe, though it is obviously convenient to muster so many chatty and informative narrators in a single book. There is a curious glossary which, besides defining (not too accurately) terms like "farrier", takes space to explain that "distant" means "far away".

In their excellent treatment of the later Middle Ages Messrs Adland and Birt are concerned to stimulate active participation from pupils of widely varying ability. The reader is presented with contemporary illustrations or simply adapted passages from *Piers Plowman*, Froissart, and Chaucer, with the odd modern map or diagram, after which he is encouraged to make up songs and plays, rub brases, draw pictures, study local history, or build a model tournament in balsa wood.

Activity is the keynote also in Jon Nichol's "Evidence in History" series. Here, though, apart from the usual invitation to draw pictures and maps, the emphasis is on imaginative writing and the marshalling of arguments and

facts. What would you have advised Richard III to do at midday at the Battle of Bosworth? Let's see how successful you would have been as a plotter against Henry VII. How did the tea-drinking in a Tudor school differ from your own experience? Pieces of evidence, occasionally conflicting, are laid before the reader, who is taught to distinguish between primary and secondary sources. Social and political history are both fully covered throughout the Tudor period, and every effort is made to develop independent thought.

Dealing only with Elizabeth's reign Fiona Reynolds can adopt a smoother, more relaxed and readable style, though, like all these books, hers includes plenty of illustrations and questions to follow up. The main thing here is the social history, and especially that of the common people. Rightly the author warns her young readers not to be misled by the elegant portraits of a minority, painted to look their best - or a little better. The reality for many more Elizabethans was poverty and sickness, hard work or beggary, child mortality, and the all too early loss of wife or husband. Having made this essential point, however, she does not forget the brighter side, and shows us that in spite of everything they enjoyed plenty of literacy, fun and games. Her own account is backed by a wealth of well-selected passages from the letters, wills, diaries and other documents of the time.

author would have us believe and it is precisely those elms in woods which have the greatest survival rate after years of Dutch elm disease.

The illustrations in this *Guide* are adequate though occasionally badly captioned: "trees play an important part in street scenes in France" or "trees... can be set to good effect in pedestrian areas". What kinds of trees? And one knows that citrus fruits are important to the Near East, but where is the inviting market in the photograph? Are they grapefruit in the foreground or might they be citron? Is it usual wherever this place is to string up oranges in that attractive way as we do on donkeys?

Francesca Greenoak

Where epiphytes perch

Illustrated Guide to Trees. By Richard Gore.
Ward Lock £6.95. 0 7063 6003 6

Publishers seem to find it obligatory to have a tree book in their list, though after the highly informative and well-written works of Hugh Johnson and Gerald Wilkin, most other general interest tree books are a poor man's fare and this is still true. The *Illustrated Guide* attempts a world-wide survey, and though necessarily selective, covers a good range of species both in the discursive chapters and in the reference section. Richard Gore's dry style becomes more enjoyable with familiarity and there are some nice touches. I like his description of epiphytes perching in trees. While his language is sometimes difficult, the writing is clear - witness his lucid explanation of the nomenclature of the plant we commonly call "japponica". His assertion that *Murraya koenigii* is the ingredient which gives curry its distinctive aroma was new to me, and sent me to my curry jars and cookery books. It was not among the 30 species listed as curry ingredients and I found reference

to it only in the OED. Perhaps it is of restricted use - I shall investigate - but I could have done without the confusing misprint which left me wondering which species of *Murraya* I should be looking for.

Richard Gore approaches this subject very much from a gardener's viewpoint, and text and pictures focus largely on parks and garden trees, virtually no woodland, and some resulting unbalanced over-estimates of the importance of landscape gardeners in the countryside as a whole. I take the point that a single species forest is vulnerable to disease but I would argue it contrarywise. Our native woodlands are considerably more varied in their species than this

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Richard Gore approaches this subject very much from a

resources



"Model Dorman", a photograph by Man Ray. From the Fotofolio collection.

Picture tour

by Peter Dormer

Writers and Readers, the publishing co-operative, have become distributors of the *Fotofolio* collection of photographic postcards. In all there are 700 cards covering photography from the mid-19th century to the present day, and among the many names represented are Atget, Cameron, Eakins, Gibson, Muybridge, Man Ray, Strand and Weegee. The cards have several advantages. Firstly, efforts have been made to make the quality of each picture as good and as close to the original print as possible. Sometimes publishers alter the tone and "colour" of early photographs to suit modern taste — often to the detriment of the original image. The cards are also useful for building up collections of photographs around themes such as fashion, or portraiture. Indeed, apart from the obvious art history function of the cards, they are useful as social history. Moreover, one can buy enough copies of any one photograph to enable a class of children to work from the same picture at one time.

For further information, including exact details of price, contact Fotofolio, Writers and Readers, 25 Nassington Road, London NW3. 01-267 0511.

Collectors quality

by Bernard Orna

Tolly Cobbold Eastern Arts national art exhibition is establishing itself as a major event. The third one is now at Christchurch Mansion, in Ipswich, and will be touring other cities. It comprises 81 works, each by a different artist. Media include oils, watercolours, photography and relief, and genres are variously representational, impressionistic, fantasy and abstract. The selection was made by David Brown of the Tate Gallery with artists Patrick George, Tim Head, Paul Huxley and Birgit Riley.

The organisers have now introduced a valuable educational connection. Preview visits for teachers can be a preliminary to visits by school parties, when experts may be available to guide them. There are "Looking and Choosing" work sheets for primary and middle school children which suggest several approaches to the works.

For senior pupils, a one-day seminar on May 9 at the Fitzwilliam was led by art historian Jane Beckett and artist Richard Wentworth. Events at Ipswich and Norwich and a seminar at the ICA, London, are being discussed. Another innovation is a series of day schools on "Art in the 80s" to be held at Christchurch Mansion on June 13 and Castle Museum, Norwich on July 18.

For details and bookings, write to The Director, Board of Extra-Mural Studies, Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge. Information about the London seminar can be obtained from Sandy Nairn, ICA, The Mall, London SW1, and further general information about the exhibition from Jackie Ford, 49 Ellington Street, London N7, or Roger Wollen, Eastern Arts Association, 89 Bridge Street, Cambridge.

The exhibition is at Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich, until June 21; Castle Museum, Norwich, July 4 to August 9; Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, August 14 to September 13; and Mappin Art Gallery, Sheffield, September 19 to October 11.

Practical aspects of programming

A. K. Hennessy suggests that structured methods are essential in the teaching of basic computing skills

Computer programming is a cumulative skill, depending on concept development, insight and practice at each level of proficiency. People who manage to acquire a reasonable level of skill at programming usually do so because of a particular aptitude or as a result of considerable determination and hard work.

If we are to satisfy the growing need for basic programming skills, especially among people who need to



use computers for their work, these skills have to become more accessible, few people can afford to devote large amounts of time and effort in this way.

Although a lot of attention is being given to structured programming, the teaching of programming is usually unstructured, and based more on the use of facilities available in particular languages. Assignments used for skill development are usually too large, unstructured, and unhelpful. In some secondary schools, children are left to find their own problems for assessed programming work! This lack of structure in such a complex subject can be devastating for a student, especially in his first experience with programming.

Technical emphasis

It is easy to confuse the teaching of a programming language with that of programming technique. These are quite different aspects of programming which need to be carefully integrated with an emphasis on technique rather than language. It is not acceptable to present the instruction set of a computer programming language without relating it to the kind of problems the student will encounter in programming work.

Setting exercises and other practical programming work has to be done with care. All practical programming work should be divided into segments that can be completed in no more than two weeks as an absolute maximum. The first exercises should not take more than an hour. Learning objectives should be defined for each exercise, related directly to the material that is taught immediately before the exercise is assigned to the students, and each assignment should be designed to achieve specific teaching objectives.

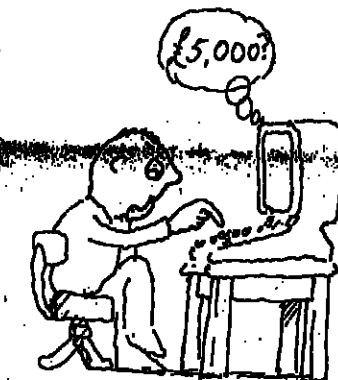
No student should ever be put in the position of not being able to make progress because of unresolved difficulties encountered in the first part of the course, and no work should be assigned for which students have not had specific instruction, both in theory and language. The "treasure hunt" approach to practical exercises in programming is inappropriate for all but a very small minority of students. Long project-style programming assignments are really only an administrative convenience; the instructors don't have to keep track of students' progress and need do only one assessment if any.

The first problem, that of structur-

ing the programming course, will be determined by the type of programming skills to be achieved. In the case of commercial programming, the emphasis must be on file-handling, data declaration, and editing and validation of input and output variables. The course should be structured around the problems that this type of programming presents: first, the manipulation of constants and variables in memory; then, movement of information to and from files; and finally the restructuring and redefinition of data in its progress in and out of memory. For COBOL programming this means that the Procedure Division should be taught first.

The organisation of practical work is the greatest problem for course organisers and instructors. It involves problems about the allocation of resources which have to be dealt with if computer programming is to extend beyond the most able and the most aggressive. James Martin's "rule of thumb" now widely used in industry to estimate programming requirements, states that the usual "production" rate of an experienced programmer is 12-15 tested instructions a day, or 2 per working hour.

The number of instructions should not be greater than twice the hours allocated for programming work, yet many assignments require students who are new to the job to write and



test several hundred instructions in a week. Another problem in many programming courses is that some of the students will have written computer programs before, and will be reasonably good at techniques such as array-handling, "do" loops, and read/write procedures. With such an uneven spread of experience and abilities among students, instructors often find great difficulty in setting work that is challenging and fair to all students.

Working skeleton program

To give students adequate experience, programming assignments should be structured so that they build on a working "skeleton" program wherever possible, adding parts to the program with each assignment so that at the end of the course the student comes away with a program that covers all the major problems. The beginning programmer is likely to encounter, at the end of each week's work, which the student should submit for assessment, a solution to the exercise should be given. This should form the "skeleton" for the next assignment. When there is no solution for programming, how to tackle certain tasks effectively. This method also requires the instructor to examine carefully the techniques and facilities that will be needed to complete the assignment before it is given to students, and to limit the size to something that can be achieved by most students.

Provision for data preparation for programming courses is the great unresolved problem. However, the subject is taught. The instructor who takes the trouble to prepare solutions

to programming exercises and then does the arithmetic to determine data preparation requirements is engaging in a discouraging exercise, because the cost of providing the necessary facilities is beyond the resources of even the richest organisation.

Data preparation

For example, even IBM programming trainees have been asked to pair up with another student to jointly prepare one program; this is to save both on data preparation and on demands on computer facilities. It will take each student with normal beginner keying speeds two hours to key in and edit a 50-instruction program of 20 characters per instruction. Provision for a class of, say, 30 programming students will involve the full-time allocation of at least nine keyboard machines for the peak demand of the latter third of the assignment time.

The cheapest this can be done properly for 30 students at the moment is about £22,000 for most high-level programming languages other than BASIC. On the other hand, if trained key operators are used for data preparation, only two machines will be needed but the salaries will offset any savings in a period of about three years. For those students who are set long exercises, data preparation becomes the exercise in extreme frustration where the race goes to the swift and aggressive rather than to the good programmer.

Ignoring the resource implications of programming exercises is one of the major failures in programming courses, and one of the main reasons why much of programming instruction remains unstructured. When a comparison is made of the funds necessary for provision for other practical and technical subjects such as woodwork, engineering, metalwork, home economics and physics, we can see why programming is so frustrating for teachers and learners.

Assessment of students' programming performance is another area which is not well enough defined. For each assignment given, students should be made aware of what marks are available, how they will be allocated, and what marks they have achieved for their work. This can discourage students especially mature students who are not accustomed to regular feedback of this sort and so tend to need to be very reassuring, especially at the start of the practical work.

Assessment is nevertheless necessary. Students need to know how they are working and to be motivated for continued effort. In a marking scheme, at least half the marks should be awarded for completion of a working program segment. This means that adequate facilities have to be provided so for most students to get their programs to run. Marks should be awarded for correct use of the language, clearly written, for understandable coding.

Areas of difficulty should be dealt with as quickly as possible. If the instructor is unfamiliar with the particular equipment, compiler, or system used for practical work, then extra time has to be allowed or extra technical help obtained to deal with the inevitable problems.

Unless programming instruction and assignments are carefully structured, the programming course will get completely out of hand when new facilities are used. The situation which one often sees in programming courses, with one instructor for 20 to 30 students, is an exercise in frustration for all concerned in which only the most talented and aggressive survive.

When instruction and assignments are carefully structured and integrated, the conditions are created for more students to get through the programming course with an adequate level of proficiency, making use of minimal facilities. But the real answer lies in acceptance of the fact that teaching programming is very expensive, if we are to equip enough of our people to cope with the challenges of the coming information



and for use of appropriate log structures.

The use of facilities has to be controlled, for there will always be students who monopolise equipment for two or three times longer than scheduled. Students whose programs are not in a state to be run should not be allowed to submit their work for data preparation, nor to be up facilities trying to key in and run something that has no chance of running. This means the instructor has to check every student's program before it is submitted for data preparation or the student is allowed on the machines to key in his own work. Unless the programming instructor and assignments are carefully monitored, the instructor will find this impossible task.

Error traps

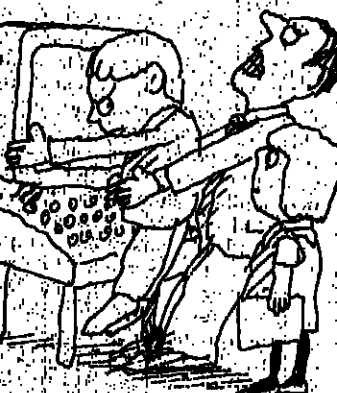
To make the best use of the computing facilities, students' programs should also contain error traps and monitoring instructions so that the instructor and/or the student can locate and correct programming errors as well as system and compiler problems quickly. Students benefit from becoming accustomed from the outset to program design and testing standards, but only if these standards are consistently enforced.

Technical support for students is an area that is largely ignored. In general a ratio of one experienced programmer/technician to every five students is needed for scheduled laboratory/advisory sessions (which should take up at least one-third of the programming course timetable). The instructor should arrange for every student's work to be checked during every practical session, and should never assume that just because the top 10% of the group are proceeding satisfactorily, the rest are able to cope as well.

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Students who monopolise equipment

Resources for learning



Means of expression

Norman Willis on the production of audio-visual presentations by children

Given the right opportunities, management and equipment groups of children from the middle years of primary schools upwards can, with great educational benefit, research, script and produce audio-visual materials. This is a truism — and so it should be, for to my own personal knowledge it could have been written with equal validity any time over the past twenty-five years.

I recently noticed a news item from late 1957 commenting on the fact that 200 school film societies were submitting entries for a competition and the best of the films was reviewed by an eminent newspaper film critic of the day, who commented on the brilliant photography, the excellent cutting and so on. Earlier than that, there is a report of children's scripting and producing their own "broadcast" on the tape-recorder and more recently one knows of schools in which classes or groups of children were publishing tape-slide sequences and television programmes. It is all run of the mill: given the right opportunities, encouragement and equipment... So why bother mentioning it now?

The answer springs from the publicity given recently to the valuable work of Carol Lbrac and Michael Weiss whose book *Communication and Social Skills*, reporting on the first phase of their Schools Council project, has recently been published. I read their case studies of the production of a variety of audio-visual materials in various schools in the North East with a mixture of gladness and sadness. This work gives solid educational benefit; giving children used to failure a chance to succeed, encouraging peer-group criticism, helping to develop co-operation and democratic decision-

taking, unlocking creative expression in some children whose minds simply do not work in the abstraction of literary style. Yet, at the same time, how depressing it is to see the schools taking part counted in tens — almost in ones and twos.

It is sad to think that this is still a marginal activity, fine for the odd project or for the low achievers but still after twenty-five years of demonstration of its educational value, and now with a well-researched and evaluated presentation of the facts, something for the few and not for the many. Why? I want to suggest that there are at least two quite separate sets of reasons, the first academic and intellectual, the second mainly administrative.

The first springs from the dominance of the written word in our education. The reason for this is obvious and in my view not arguable: in written English we have a medium capable of supreme accuracy of description; of expressing emotion, mood; the extremes of abstract thought.

But it is a difficult medium to handle (and I speak not as a teacher, but as a publisher) and many of us, even the well-educated, are not really at home with it. How much more then, for a young person who has trouble enough understanding his "own" thoughts and emotions. Hold the picture in your mind of the spring morning, and newly opened leaves of a fortyish bush, and ask yourself how adequate to a sensitive teenager her description of it would be in words? And ask how much nearer to a total expression of description, mood and sheer experience would be a colour photograph or a sequence of moving film. The written word would only be appropriate in the hands of a master.

Written English is essentially an individual medium. Try writing in a co-operative situation and the result is almost invariably "committee prose" — instantly recognisable by its flat, lifeless tone. In an education system designed to be both competitive and discriminatory, it is helpful that the medium of expression of knowledge reflects so directly the output of one mind. Remember, though, that it represents only the output, not the content of that mind. Sometimes it is so hard a medium for the inexperienced to use that only a small part of what is known is actually expressed.

Over the centuries, man has developed communication from spoken word and gesture, through pictorial representation to the precision of written language, musical notation and mathematics — all of them developments more than a thousand years old, and all of them made widely available through the five-hundred year old technology of printing. In the face of this tremendous historical dominance of the printed written symbol throughout civilisation, it is hardly surprising that education finds other media of less importance. Compared with the printed word, media such as photography, cine photography, recorded sound and television are hardly out of the cradle.

My second set of reasons are administrative. As I have said, writing is individual. Therefore if you wish to assess an individual it is an admirable medium: if "co-operation" has taken place, style variations are usually apparent. Writing is also a cheap, low technology medium — as available in train or bus as it is at desk or kitchen table. No special aids are needed to

read it and, as an additional benefit, a written text can be "skimmed" — its content absorbed by rapid scanning. Try "skimming" a sound recording — "skipping" is possible, leaving bits out and sampling the rest — but it is impossible to extract the salient points at high speed and the same can be said for film, television and tape-slide sequences. It is hardly surprising, in the face of such manifest advantages, that in education, the written response rules, and little time is found for the production by children of audio-visual statements. Is it reasonable, therefore, in the face of a packed curriculum and the presence of examination success, to expect anything else? I say "yes" and I do so again for two reasons.

First, consider young people's experience of the media of communication. How much is in the form of the written word? How much of it is in the form of recorded sound or vision? How many young people own tape recorders, cameras, radios, even their own television receivers? How many of them willingly write a letter if they live in a house with a telephone? If their world is soaked in audio-visual communication, should they be left — as too many of their parents are — as passive recipients of the programme output of others? Would you tolerate an education system which made no attempt to teach the grammar, structure, creative use and critical appreciation of written English? I suggest not, yet that is what we are largely doing with the "new" media.

Second, consider, in a society which is becoming increasingly interdependent, the impact of concentrating so heavily on a means of communication which is essentially individual and

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Conferences and realities

Wendy Roy reports on issues which have emerged from some recent conferences on themes of educational technology

Educational conferences are often felt by delegates to be distanced from educational reality. Teachers attending the ETIC (Educational Technology International Conference), ETA (Educational Television Association), CAL (Computer Assisted Learning) and MIPA (Microprocessors in Primary Education) gatherings last month were unlikely to have had such a problem, for most of the papers presented at these conferences reflected a concern for real educational issues arising from the use of technology in schools.

While each conference concentrated upon its individual aspect of educational use of technology, central themes emerged which ran through all the conferences. General presentations outlined the philosophical and pedagogical issues of technology in schools and their long and short term implications for all sections of education — producers of hardware and software, teachers and pupils.

Case studies highlighted the concern with evaluation of teaching systems and the processes they develop; the

perennial question of whether objectives were adequate enough as tools for measurement of teaching effectiveness was discussed in detail, particularly at ETIC and ETA.

A number of papers showed there was a growing awareness of the benefits to students in using equipment — whether video etc., or computers, — rather than students just being taught about it. Using equipment broadens and deepens student learning in ways not developed by traditional methods.

Carol Lorac, at ETA, showed how different kinds of learning was required by 11 to 19-year-old students in using video equipment; David Bound from Australia showed ETIC delegates how older students learned new perspectives from developing their own distance learning material using a variety of media; Boulay and Howe from Edinburgh, at CAL, explained how mathematical computer programs can alleviate the shortage of mathematics teachers while developing student ability to learn simple computer programs to a pre-defined procedure; and MIPA delegates experienced for themselves

the potential of controlled toy handling teaching practical mathematical and scientific principles in the process of having fun.

In terms of evaluation, these and other studies cannot account for all learning by simply measuring objectives. Especially since the use of technology within education implies an expansion of the purpose of formal education — the training of youngsters into a new thought system based on that technology.

The training of teachers into this new thought system was discussed at length at all the conferences. Bob Coates, of the Microelectronics Education Programme, told MIPA delegates that trainee teachers should receive computer instruction before initial teacher training.

It was generally accepted that it was the students within schools who are creating effective innovative uses for computers, rather than teachers. Teachers were apprehensive about the equipment and their abilities to use it. Keynote speakers at all conferences echoed the cry for more assistance for



teachers in overcoming this problem.

During a discussion at the ETA conference Colin Palmer of Bath University asked whether this new equipment was going to go the way of previous teaching toys — into dusty school cupboards. Terry Hinton of Surrey University encapsulated the view of many of the delegates at all

these gatherings, that computers and other innovations were here to stay — because it is the school children who are controlling the equipment today — not the teachers.

However, despite the pockets of school groups where children are developing their own programs, the creation of computer software programs still depends on formal sponsored development or enthusiastic groups of teachers.

Many papers presented case studies about the development of software programs, either in the form of simulations or distance learning programs. These covered the gamut of educational levels and topic areas, with a strong mathematical emphasis.

Several references were made to the fact that if one wished to look at reliable and effective software models, one needed to go to those developed for handicapped or disadvantaged pupils. The Margaret Cox study of teaching underprivileged boys mathematics, which was also found to develop the boy's social skills, was remarked upon at both CAL and ETIC.

New innovative software programs (adding to the manufacturer's language built into specific computer models), showed that a variety of software and related hardware problems are being solved. Specifically this will mean that within a few years, despite the variety of computer models being used, there will be facilities to use software programs designed for one model on any other, whether micro or main-frame — provided the right additions are made to the memory and language controls of the individual machine. Such a modification was outlined in the School's Council Computers in the Curriculum Project presented at CAL by the Chelsea College of Science and Mathematics.

With this upsurge in the provision of additional facilities for computer terminals, delegates are faced with a confusing array of languages and programs from which they could, in theory, choose to supplement their own models' abilities. However, in practice a delegate would have to be extremely well versed in the often vague and minor distinctions between models, systems, loading principles, languages, etc., to choose programs and supplementary functions effectively for their own models. Bob Coates told the MIPA delegates that for this reason there needed to be standards and conventions for program materials established, with a subsequent communication system for teachers about access and availability of such software developments.

Finally, the presentations, workshops and seminars presented by industry, commerce and the service, underline the fact that despite curricular and practical differences, using technology to teach involves training as well as teaching personnel. The banking sector was most notable in its contribution of in-depth analysis of training problems. The Trustees Savings Bank at ETIC, the National Westminster at ETA, and the Midland Bank at CAL, all outlined a variety of ways of evaluating training for a variety of purposes, and emphasized the added dimensions computer control of data gives to any assessment of training courses.

Are they too young to be told the facts of community life?

A lot of eight to thirteen-year-olds don't think so. Young people want to look around. They want to learn more about the world they live in. This growing awareness, the questions, are all part of growing up.

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3: Local Services to our Homes.

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2: Roads.

3: Airports.

WORK Section 1: Introduction—The things we want.

2: Factories.

3: Shops and Offices.

4: Farms and Fishing.

5: Mines and Forests.

LEISURE Section 1: Introduction—Our spare time activities.

2: Sports and Amusements.

3: Motor Sports.

4: Holidays.

Each of the four filmstrips (available in half-frame or full-frame for mounting on slides) has a CD cassette with commentary and audible cueing.

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*Offer applies only to the UK

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5. 'Male and Female'—challenges expectations of sex stereotype, in the home, the school and in adult relationships.

6. 'I Am'—asks who I am, how did I get to be this way, and where do I fit in?

7. 'I Will Be'—questions what lies ahead in facing up to job prospects, marriage, where to live, further education.

8. 'They're Always Picking On Us'—argues through such issues as who imposes authority, with what right, in what circumstances and in what manner.

Although the films have been conceived as a series, you may not wish (or have time) to show all eight, so we suggest alternative permutations involving just two or three of the films, eg.

a) 'Points of View', 'Communication' and 'They're Always Picking On Us'.

b) 'Communication' and 'Love, Love, Love'.

c) 'I Am' and 'I Will Be'.

d) 'Communication' and 'They're Always Picking On Us'.

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BRITISH GAS

extra Transfer deals

Wendy Roy reports on a Schools Council system which enables schools to transfer software from one computer to another

Any teacher who has just taken charge of a microcomputer — or any other model — is faced with two problems. First, it probably doesn't do what you want it to do, for example the graphics you need. Second, you can't use a teaching program designed for another type of computer.

Conversely, producers of teaching packages cannot sell their products to all the teachers who would use them in class, unless they write a program for every type of machine being used in schools.

As producers of computer based packages, the Chelsea College Computers in the Curriculum team had to solve the first problem for teachers — to a degree — in order to solve the second for themselves. They have had to develop a "library" of computer instructions which can be fed into different kinds of computers enhancing the facilities each manufacturer has built into the machine. While leaving this manufacturer's program intact the library program for each model acts to unify each model, by allowing different computers to use identical software packages in similar ways. With it teachers using a main-frame, or an Apple or PET can use the same program and back-up teaching notes.

The second problem being discussed here, the hardware problem, has not yet been solved commercially. Though a teacher can use the Chelsea library using "blocks" of new instructions, which when fed into a particular computer, allows it to act identically, syntactically — to other computer models using both the library and the teaching package, a teacher must use the same hardware system as usual. A floppy disc, just any floppy disc will not work on any model.

Each system on the market uses its own dialect of computer language based on a unique system of electronic impulse patterns. Just as it is impossible to use a Fortapak videotape on a Philips video cassette machine, so the computer using discs with one type of impulse structure — beat, pattern, will not respond to another rhythm. The confusion occurs because the discs look identical.

But the hardware problem is in the process of being solved at Chelsea in that, given two models, each using a Chelsea library, then with a little bit of technical jiggery-pokery which the Chelsea team describes as a relatively simple electronics operation, a package can be transferred from one machine to another. However, one does need two machines to do this. A

can't talk to B if B isn't there. So the machines can talk direct, but NOT through intermediary software.

So given these two distinct problems, that of differing electronic impulses and of differing syntax, the Chelsea team has developed the latter. A unifying computer language allows them to produce a single basic teaching package using a computer program and back-up text materials. With a battery of library sub-programs for different computer models, this teaching package can then be used on all common machines adapted by the library specific to that model.

The work derives from the Schools Council Computers in Curriculum Project, but the library is in fact a continuation of work from another Chelsea project. In the 1970s a university undergraduate project was looking at the problem of unifying graphics instructions for a variety of main-frame computer systems using a variety of graphic display units. At the same time Chelsea was producing standardised teletype programs for international use, which needed to be translated into microcomputer formats. Both the library and the related instruction material continue the pedagogical philosophy and methodology developed by the unit from the outset. In 1968, by project director, Dr Bob Lewis.

The teletype material developed under the Chelsea Science Simulation Project in the 1970s would have been wasted to a large extent, if the translation into microcomputer format had not been undertaken. And this meant an enormous loss of resource development. Bob Lewis estimated approximately 300 hours to develop one hour of computerised instruction, which meant £10,000 per unit in development costs for each of the 60-odd units developed at Chelsea, covering a variety of school subjects and age levels.

"Unless we have a big enough market, we can't begin to justify that kind of development if it is just being used by a few people locally who just happen to have one particular machine," he explained.

From the outset of the simulation project the team was faced with this marketing-cum-language problem. Teletype systems also used sub-sets of the language BASIC which had to be developed into a language which all would use. With this basis it was relatively simple, though laborious, to adapt the BASIC translation into a sub-set of micro computing language. This was necessary since all the teletype units needed to be redesigned in terms of the new display facilities micro provided learners.

By changing the syntactic statements of the teletype programs giving instructions to the electronics systems the continuous paper roll instructions were

modified to cope with visual displays. Too much change within programs initially, creating more appropriate visual displays of information, was undertaken since this would have created more mistakes in the program than could have been coped with and would have made obsolete the back-up teaching materials. So Chelsea has been accused of marketing out of the material.

This year, with funding from MCF, the Chelsea team intends to revise the teletype packages to make the programs look better on the video, as the microcomputer facilities more fully and hopefully improve the pedagogical processes incorporated into the teaching systems. New programs will also be developed.

"With the changes in display facilities between teletype and micro, the design of each package must be looked at," Bob Lewis said. "The original material was written so that, at the end of each day the pupil could tear off a piece of paper and have a record of the work done on the computer. This is now different. The information has to be presented in such a way that it is easily visible and, being transferable, highlights key features. Microcomputer information systems in fact put more onus on the student to select appropriate information."

The transfer from teletype to microcomputer systems was first performed on the 3802s and quickly adapted for other models. The most common range is now able to use the Chelsea material.

The library programs were launched at the CAL 81 conference last month. While there are still many teaching problems, Bob Lewis believes that they will prove invaluable to teachers, especially as each new generation of micros is developed with more facilities. With the kind of library which the Chelsea team has developed all but the most fundamental electronic changes in hardware should be able to be accommodated by the library system through updates of the instruction software. This will, to an extent, modify the necessity to change simply from one model to a later design as each is introduced onto the market.

With the DES injection of funds for computers into schools, it could be argued that there will be no real need for the Chelsea library's facility in the near future, since most school computers will standardise with two types of hardware. But here there is still the problem of software adaptability between models and transferability of programs within hardware designs. Bob Lewis believes that even with two types of computer the library will still be needed. "You will still be dealing with two machines which are very different in terms of the way their basic

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interpreter understands instructions, and the graphics controls are likely to be dissimilar. So, if we are going to minimise software production time and effort we will still need a library to interpret a single set of instructions, even if only used for two models.

However, Bob Lewis doubted very much if it would be a case of only two models. Manufacturers not producing the BBC model are unlikely to let this decision lie. Youngsters in schools who are outstripping their teachers in the use of computers are likely to make greater demands.

A major bugbear in the use of the library is the desirability of a large memory store within the computer. A small 6K memory store can only handle a limited number of sub-routine instructions if it is to use the teaching package as well. To get full use of both the library and the superimposed instructional program for a given unit the computer needs from 24K on a Pet.

However, since the library is split into a modular system of sub-routines, teachers with small computers can still find it useful. And, because it is split into sub-routines, teachers who do not wish to use the instructional program designed by Chelsea, can develop their own programs more easily with the library language than with traditional BASIC.

The problem of limited memory is not likely to be a long term problem for the library, or for Chelsea though. Computer memory facilities are growing fast and becoming cheaper.

Teachers can obtain copies of the library for £25. They need to specify precisely what model of computer they wish to apply the library to when ordering. A continuous update system will be operated by Chelsea College to ensure new innovations are included in each library program. Suggestions on how to develop the library facilities in innovative ways will also be given.

Fairer distribution

Derick Last on regional coordination of the production of resources

Although resources, however good, can never make up for poor teaching, they can almost always assist learning and are important for good teaching. As the great majority of teachers and others in education are keen to be as effective as they can, it is essential that as much as possible be done to ensure that they have the resources with which to do it.

As many resources as possible as close as possible to as many teachers as possible is the desirable aim. Of course, if not greater importance, it is knowing what resources to use when, how to use them with the greatest effect and when not to use them at all. These vital aspects of what helps to make an effective teacher (one who ensures that effective learning takes place) are really only gained as a result of personal experience or shared experience of people one has learned to trust — often as a result of working together.

At a time when we have at last begun to realise the finite nature of basic world resources and when — often for other reasons — governments, especially those in the west, are deciding to reduce financial resources for education, the "as much as possible" notion needs to be somewhat tempered. Few would go along with the notion that every child should have his or her own VCR or that every primary school should have a full time electronics engineer, or that every sixth former should have his or her own direct dial link with the British Library. Not only is it not possible, it is often not even advisable and can, in some situations, be counter-productive.

The word resources is often interpreted very widely to include people, systems — ideas as well as "things". Some are required very frequently, for exam-

ple tables, chairs, a dry warm light space, a water supply, paper on which to write, learning materials, suitable toilet facilities. Some need to be reasonably accessible: duplicating and photocopying facilities, a tape recorder, a school technician, a list of reading books likely to be of interest to some 13 year old slow learners, a mini computer, or two dozen scissors and some string are examples in this category.

Some resources are required infrequently, for example, someone to tune the piano or an electronics engineer to service a video camera, or advice on how best to help a disabled youngster or how to reorganize the school library, or someone to help with the design of materials, or information on how to be put in touch with an enthusiastic expert.

The final group of resources are required very infrequently indeed, and these are such that it is likely that the teacher may not even know of their existence; not, that is, until a need gives rise to a general cry for help, which in turn eventually leads to a response by someone with specialist knowledge.

Most authorities recognise the need to try and match resource provision to frequency of use, but they frequently fail to build in an element to take account of change. Although most "ordinary" resources can be found "somewhere" in most authorities, there are gaps. With a minimum of co-operation however, these gaps — which often tend to be in the "less frequently required" category — could be filled by sharing across boundaries.

However, it is not only in this somewhat limited area that the real importance of Regional Co-ordination lies. It is in the development of networks and systems which will, for

instance enable the information needs of the region to be analysed and efforts made to seek out and set up ways of meeting them; enable the promotion and wider distribution of locally produced teaching and learning materials; help to promote the active participation of support agencies like libraries, museums and industry in the preparation of materials both in respect of their own spheres of interest and in support of the wider issues which are sometimes of more general use to teachers, and make known the very wide range of existing regional bodies like health and water authorities, associations and professional organisations of various kinds, all of whom — almost continuously — have something to contribute to the work of education and who occasionally seek out ways of involving themselves.

It is with the possibilities of these latter aspects of co-ordination in mind that the Council for Educational Technology initiated a project entitled *The Regional Co-ordination of Educational Technology Arrangements*. To those directly involved however, the East Anglian counties of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and the Northern Home Counties of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire, the project has the less frightening title of *County Links*.

A one year pilot project in 1979/80 gave rise — among other things — to the publication and distribution through-out the region of a joint catalogue of resources published by the P.L.C. St. Albans Hertfordshire and E.A.R.O. Ely, Cambridgeshire. In the financial year just ended the project has established a consultative group made up of representatives from all the regions' L.E.A.s together with representatives from UBF, The Schools Council, The

Area Museum Service and the Library Service.

The first of a series of resources newspapers — called LINK IN has also been published and three more are planned in this second year 1981/82. Each issue is distributed free to close on 5000 educational establishments throughout the region and it is intended that they will help to establish a regional identity and give insight into the real advantages of regional co-operation which might eventually lead towards regional co-ordination.

Co-operation and co-ordination must not be confused with centralisation. Small initiatives can stand a better chance of survival if known about over a relatively large area, for then even minority support is sizeable. The primary concern of the Council for Educational Technology is to gain knowledge about regionalisation — good and not so good — to pass on to others who may have already started or who may contemplate similar moves. Those involved in the project in the region itself are equally interested in the possibility of the continuation of the initiatives after the project ends.

The changes that are likely to have to be made in education during the 1980's as a result of new technology, the effects of changing attitudes to issues like employment, energy use and a steady growth in the acceptance of the notion of world interdependence are likely to give rise to new challenges. It is very necessary that we place ourselves in the best possible position to meet the challenges as part of a caring, sharing and supportive network encompassing many different strengths.

Derick Last is Director of the County Resources and Technology Centre, Ely, Cambridgeshire.

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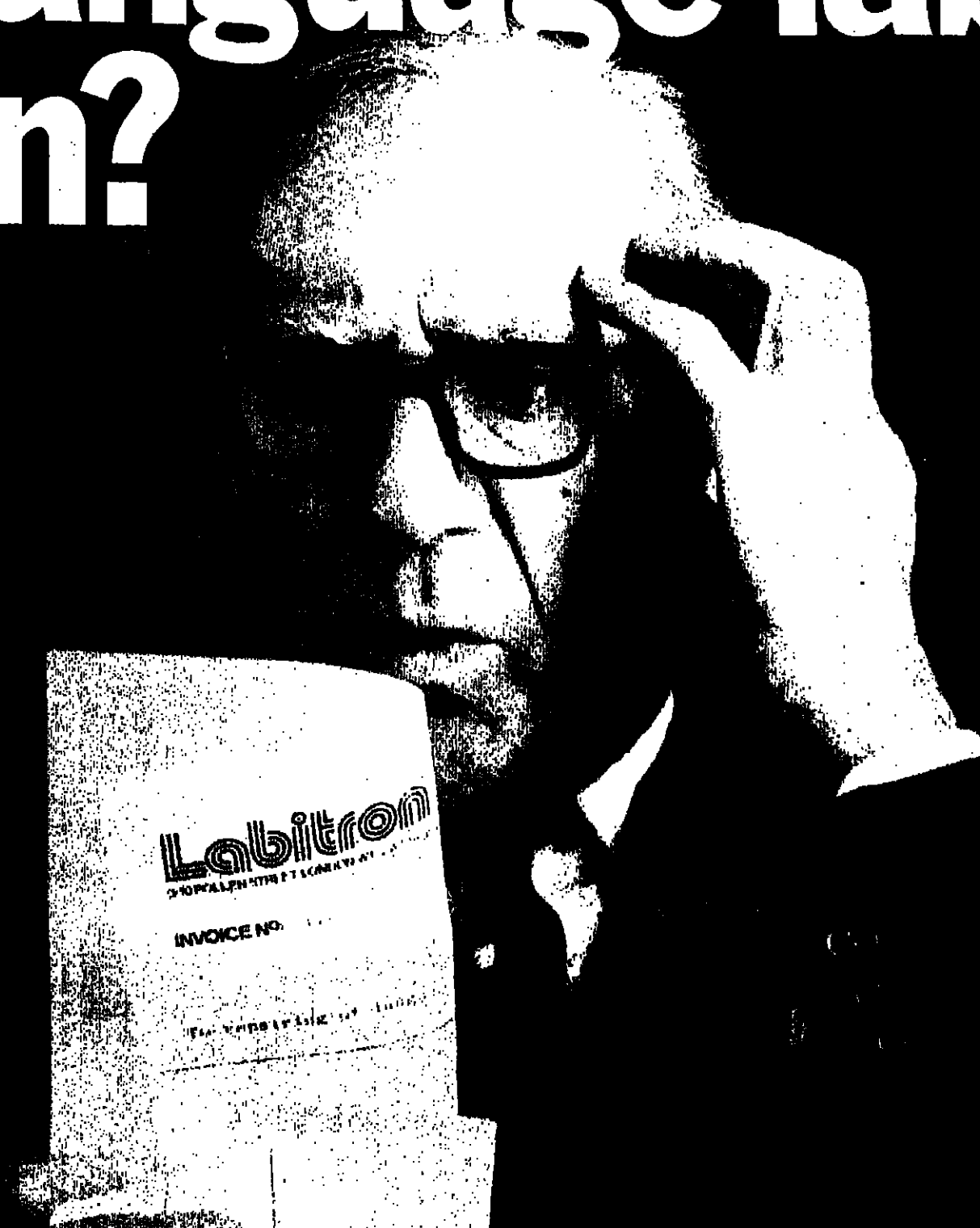
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extra

Semantic confusion

Barry Fox on teletex, videotex, videotext, viewdata etc.

Every new technology brings its own confusion. But never before has any new technology created the fog of mystery caused by the advent of teletext (with a t), teletex (without a t), videotex (without a t), videotext (with a t), viewdata and a whole string of other related names. Everyone in the business of selling these new services, and the special television equipment needed to transmit and receive them, must take a share of the blame for creating the confusion which has stifled sales. The public won't buy what it doesn't understand.

Recently, Ferguson, the consumer electronics division of Thorn-EMI, conducted a market research survey of a representative sample of 500 people who are renting or buying a television set. They were asked to describe "teletext". Of the five hundred, 33% had an exact knowledge, 60% knew absolutely nothing and 6% thought they knew. "It's something to do with messages that come from the Continent", it's like a telegram isn't it? "It's a visual telephone", "it's a brand of Post Office telex equipment", "it's a rental remote control game", were some of the answers.

So don't be ashamed or embarrassed if you, too, haven't a clue what teletext is all about. But it is worth finding out, because this new generation of technology does have a great deal to offer schools, businesses and homes.

The new technology is all about receiving written messages, sketches, graphics and even photographic pictures for display on the screen of a modified television set. The signals can be received over wires (such as telephone lines) or over the air (as TV signals). Unfortunately there is as yet no common agreed world standard either for the technology or the terminology. Hence the confusion over names. What is it, is it possible to have a simple term?

First, the whole area should come under the generic term *videography*. There are two ways of transmitting this information - over wires or by radio or television wireless broadcasts.

Both the BBC and ITV companies (under the IBA) transmit data signals along with their ordinary broadcasts. These are called *teletext* signals and the digital code which carries teletext information (pages of weather forecasts, new fashions, programme details and so on) are carried piggy-back on top of the ordinary picture signals.

The BBC has a team of twenty people, working in shifts between 6 am and midnight to edit (i.e. write into a computer) up to 500 pages of teletext

information for transmission on BBC's 1 and 2. The "magazine" of which viewers can select pages of particular interest to them but some pages occupy more than one screen full of information, hence the total of 500 pages. These spill-over pages are called "rolling pages".

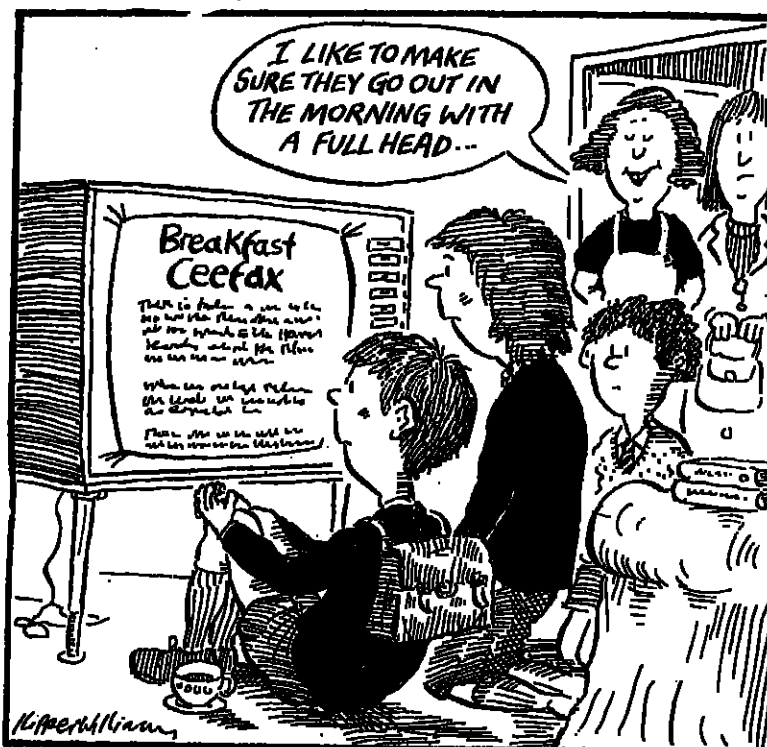
Because the teletext signals are carried on ordinary programme signals, teletext can only be transmitted while the programme transmitters are on the air. This represents a significant commercial handicap because teletext as a source of information comes into its own at just the time when it is unavailable, that is to say early morning or late at night.

Because the BBC and IBA are in competition over their teletext services, just as they are in competition over ordinary TV programme services, the BBC call their teletext service *Ceefax* and the IBA call theirs *Oracle*. Although understandable for commercial reasons, this increases the confusion. Common sense dictates that the broadcasters should concentrate first on educating the public over what teletext is all about and then start fighting for a share of the market ratings.

In the main reception lobby of BBC TV Centre there has for years been a permanent teletext display. But the only word used is *Ceefax*, with not a single mention of teletext! This is as silly as selling radio sets under the name of a station, or trying to sell the notion of a motor car to a horse-drawn public by advertising only under brand names like Ford and Austin.

Because the BBC and ITV share television transmitters, it often happens that the two bodies simultaneously announce the opening of the same transmitter relay, for instance to improve reception in a hilly part of the country. This is a pity, as the announcements are so similar that the BBC publicists refer to the transmitter as "carrying the Ceefax services" while the IBA refers to the transmitter as "carrying the Oracle service for viewers having receivers suitable for teletext".

This all helps to explain why there are still only 150,000 teletext sets in the UK even though we have had a full teletext service since September 1974, i.e. for over six years. The UK market for services has also been handicapped because teletext sets have been too highly priced (a premium of around over £100 compared with conventional sets). The set-makers argue, of course, that they cannot afford to sell their text sets any cheaper.



Predictably the French have developed the sophisticated electronics for the receiver circuits become cheaper. For instance, whereas current teletext services (Ceefax and Oracle) offer only type-face words and simple graphics, it is perfectly possible to transmit and receive much more complicated messages (for instance oriental languages), more sophisticated graphic designs and even still pictures like photographic slides.

Each of these improvements requires more electronic "memory" in the receiver and memory circuits are still expensive. Memory is needed because the teletext signals are transmitted and received slowly, stored in a circuit memory electronically in the set and then read out quickly to produce a picture on the screen. The more information that can be read out, the more detailed the pictures can be, but obviously a large memory is needed to provide a large readout.

One very important use of teletext is the provision of optional sub-titles over television programmes for the deaf. Those with teletext receivers have the option to watch sub-titles superimposed on the normal programme pictures. There are nearly 3 million deaf or hard of hearing in the UK but, both the BBC and ITV companies still only provide an hour of sub-titled programmes a week each.

Shortage of staff and equipment is blamed for the small output of sub-titled programmes; it takes up to 30 hours of work to subtitle one hour of pre-recorded programme and lack of money is blamed for shortage of staff and equipment. The BBC has a curious set of priorities; having recently spent £4.4 million on the *Gone With The Wind* package of old films!

When signals are transmitted over wires or telephone cables, the service is normally referred to as *videotex*. Such a service is "interactive" because the user can send signals back along the wires, to "talk to" the computer which is transmitting the text. Obviously broadcast teletext cannot be interactive, because signals cannot be sent back to the BBC and ITV transmitters and computers which are sending out the text signals.

The videotex system used in the UK is called *viewdata* and the British Post Office - how call Teletex - operates a service called *Prestel*. As if to add to the confusion, British Telecom recently press-released a decision to launch *teletex*. This, the press were told, would enable users to transmit pages of typewritten correspondence direct over the telephone network using *teletext* terminals and "will herald a major step forward in office automation".

Teletex, of which there will now doubtless be a great deal, has nothing to do with teletext. It's simply an advance on existing telex services used by over a million subscribers around the world. It all helps explain

why the press, trade, public and education authorities are tempted to take the easy way out and play ostrich to this whole new area of new technology.

Predictably the French have developed their own quite different videotex system, called *Antiope* or *Télérel*. In Canada there is *Tellidon* and in Japan there is *Capline*. Currently there is a power struggle in progress over videotex because every country which has developed a system is trying to sell that system to any other countries which have not yet developed a system of their own.

A similar power struggle is running over broadcast teletext. All the signs are that most of Europe, except France, will standardize on British-style viewdata and teletext. Elsewhere in the world evaluation tests are still going on. The French are pushing *Antiope* very hard, even to the extent of offering to equip telephone subscribers with computer terminals in place of telephone directories.



There are many other developments in the broad field of videography or videotext but a discussion of these would only serve to confuse. One development is, however, worthy of special mention. It is possible to transmit a computer programme by teletext so that any with a home or business computer can programme it from signals received over the air. Tests are being run under way: the system is called *Teletexware*. Some people, with an eye to security and privacy, prefer this approach to that of direct back-and-forth communication with the Post Office Prestel computer. Rightly or wrongly, they are worried about feeding private and business information, for instance on their income tax affairs, down a line and into a Post Office computer.

The transmission of teletext programmes for personal computers might in some cases obviate the need to return any information back to the transmitter, and this would for some users be a more attractive proposition than interactive use of viewdata.

Prestel on trial

by Bill Hicks

Prestel users who submit on their terminals gain access to the Council for Educational Trial. Curriculum Index, cross-references to other on Prestel by subject area, age-level suitability. This, and more than two years public availability, world's first viewdata system, the most concrete example attempt to make its riches accessible to teachers.

The Index, which was compiled by librarians, but which teachers been encouraged to add when they discover interesting sources of data, by the "response frames" is an achievement of a one-year Education trial sponsored by the Department of Industry and by the CET in London. It started last June, with receivers placed in primary schools having to cover themselves. All teachers asked to complete regular which it is hoped will form material for detailed Prestel's educational potential.

The final results are still becoming clear that the trial confirm some of the fears of well as pointing to perhaps more profitable ways of using Prestel schools than as a kind of electronic encyclopedia.

Education was identified as one of the key markets for Prestel and its inception ten years ago, and the prospect of an almost unlimited of constantly updated information from a vast range of providers was greeted with enthusiasm by educationists, especially in the United Kingdom, where the off-air teletext system, unlike the on-air teletext system, allows considerable interaction between provider and user. As the service developed, they thought, it would provide a new, economic and infinitely flexible development in the old idea of programmed learning - which anyone with a TV set and telephone could have access.

The dream may yet become reality but the rate of progress has been slower than predicted. There are now only 200,000 Prestel terminals in use, the vast majority in business and only 160 or so in the educational sector - more than half of which are in further and higher education establishments.

British Telecom has helped that the initial marketing of Prestel too heavily aimed at the domestic market and has recently been making appeals to win back schools and teachers will have access, with its own private viewdata system, with an apparently fair success.

But it has not forgotten schools and still regards education as a potential good customer. Prestel's education sector development manager, Mr. Dungey, is mainly concerned with placing more sets in schools, together with teachers and set up, organized to that end.

Confident that Prestel does not face an obstacle to more rapid development, the lack of a sufficiently educational database, the value of the Curriculum Index now in use, the effort should now be put into more educational institutions, especially polytechnics.

When that happens, schools have more incentive to buy terminals and he suggested that Parents' Associations could organize raising private and business information, for instance on their income tax affairs, down a line and into a Post Office computer.



continued from previous page

more supporters to help schools with favourable terms.

Some of the developments foreseen by Mr Dungey are already being put into practice in Scotland, where the Scottish Council for Educational Technology has been running its own Prestel in Education programme since 1978, with funding from the Scottish Education Department. To date, it has placed four receivers in schools and teachers' centres, and hopes to be putting out more adaptors in the near future on its own initiative "just to get things moving".

Denis Daly, in charge of the SCET programme, believes that the most promising growth area for Prestel will be as an adjunct to microcomputers - which anyone with a TV set and telephone could have access.

As well as transmitting pages of text, Prestel can be used to store and transmit computer programmes, and with the addition of a relatively cheap adaptor, a 380Z or similar microcomputer can be made to think it is a Prestel terminal. This capability will greatly extend the capacity of school computers. SCET, working with the Scottish Microelectronics Development Programme, hopes to create a central database to which individual schools and teachers will have access, as well as contributing their own programmes for use by teachers in other schools throughout the country.

The possibilities of this "teletextware" application of Prestel have been recognized by the Department of Industry, which is funding a separate two-year trial with the CET in London.

There are, however, plenty of other ways in which Prestel can, and is, helping teachers, both as a primary source of teaching material and as an administrative aid.

Even its existing database of some 200,000 pages of text (100 words to a page) with the availability of rather "mosaic" graphics in seven colours, always up to date, as well as interactive games and quizzes provided by various commercial information providers.

education organizations and advisory groups, who would like to become information providers.

Two areas where information is constantly required, and constantly changing: further education and careers, are obvious candidates for the "electronic mail" aspect of Prestel. For the former, UCCA, the Universities Central Council on Admissions, was quick to provide pages showing the daily course vacancy situation, and has more recently started an experiment in handling the complete process of application for university places by Prestel, again making use of its teletextware capacity.

Less progress seems to have been made on the job front, even though careers officers and teachers are now all the more in need of instant notification of each new vacancy. To date, most of the employment opportunities included by commercial Prestel information providers have been for highly qualified personnel, of little use to school leavers. If, or when, Prestel is universal in schools, the electronic mail function will, of course, also be valuable in the day-to-day running of schools, as a means of sending and receiving circulars, placing and processing orders.

One rather surprising finding which has already emerged from the CET trial is that the running costs - which are brutally apparent to Prestel users, with the "bill to date" displayed on each page - have not been as prohibitive as many feared. Primary schools, apparently, found that children leaving the terminal on for long periods could be put to good use by giving extra help; secondary schools, particularly those already using telephone links to computers, found the extra cost was bearable. Each page can cost up to 50p to access, plus the cost of a local phone call, but the average charge is much lower.

Whatever the rate of progress in schools, it seems inevitable that Prestel, or other viewdata systems, will become the dominant form of information transmission in commerce, and many industries already include viewdata instruction in specialist training courses. The medical profession, travel industry, publishing and retailing are each experimenting with Prestel in different ways, as a cost-effective and powerful tool, and it is becoming increasingly important for school leavers at least to understand how to use the keyboard (a skill which most children taking part in current trials have apparently taken great delight in mastering far more quickly and thoroughly than their teachers!).

All involved in pioneering Prestel in schools agree that more coordination, and more government initiatives, and perhaps a change in teachers' attitudes, will be necessary before its full potential is attainable; all are equally confident that it will happen, eventually.

Video events

Susie Rodwell reports on International Video Week

Where is video going? That the answer to this is still far from clear became increasingly apparent at the Video Conference, one event of the major International Video Week which took place from May 11 to 15 at the National Film Theatre in London. The week's activities encompassed a wide range of video events, and in addition to the two day business conference presented by The Economist, BISFA was staging the first International Video Festival for non-entertainment programmes, and the International Television Association was running Video Workshops.

At the conference, a distinguished array of international speakers from the business, educational, industrial and communications field, attempted through facts and projections, conjectures and demonstrations to relate video technology to business and economic realities. The 250 delegates received a surfeit of often conflicting information and opinions on such topics as the world video economy, a technical view of the future, the impact of satellites and cable, video in the third world, copyright problems, and video discs in business and education.

Despite all the rhetoric, the conference did provide a valuable forum for assessment of the current situation. It highlighted a number of important issues, for example, how critical the marketing strategy can be for emerging technology and how essential it is for hardware and software producers to



share responsibility for fostering developments in the media.

Video itself is all things to all people, it seems increasingly to be used to cover both simple video equipment and broadcast telecommunications. Not surprisingly at this event, most attention was given to video discs, which after a decade of gestation and many millions of dollars spent on R & D are now a reality, with the optical video disc player - Philips Laser Vision - arriving in the UK in the Autumn.

For the first time in Europe all three rival systems were being demonstrated under one roof, and it was difficult not to be impressed, particularly with the interactive capabilities of the more sophisticated LaserVision System. There is, however, a strongly held view that with three incompatible systems coming on the market, there will be a

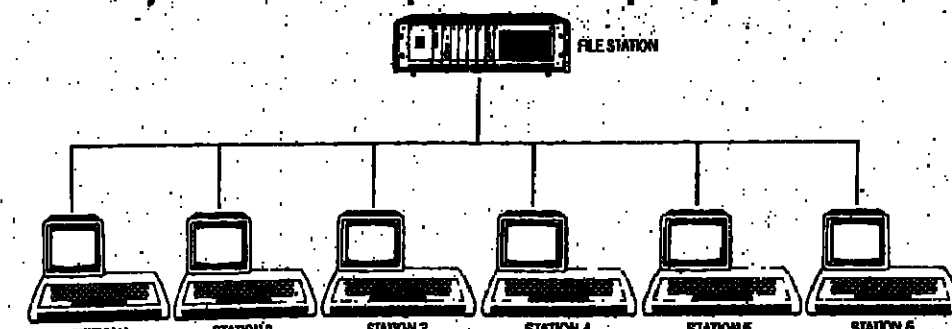
fight to the death. Moreover other technologies now on the sidelines, such as small portable videocassette recorders, VHS based combined micro camera/recorders, high definition television systems may be the more exciting product developments.

The message which so frequently emerges at conferences of this nature, is that the technology is not the problem, it is accelerating fast although the speed and growth are debatable, but as one North American speaker observed "technology will go no place unless the software is produced and unless the need is created in the market place... there is a danger of oversteering technology before we fully understand the programming challenges, and without a market we cannot survive".

continued on next page

THE ACORN ECONET

The new low-cost interconnecting communication system for computers and peripherals.



"To our knowledge the Econet is by far the lowest cost network available in the world."

A ten station network with 400K byte file station costs around £3,000 and then at £50 for each additional station interface.

WHAT THE ECONET DOES
The Econet communications network system has been developed to enable up to 255 Acorn and/or other systems to communicate with each other almost instantaneously and to share facilities such as disks and printers. The network is totally democratic. All stations can communicate with each other independently unless specifically prohibited at a data transfer rate of up to 210 kilobaud. Any station can be set up as a master station with an ability to define priorities and open or close facilities to subordinate stations. The master station can however communicate with all stations at once or singly.

HOW THE ECONET WORKS
All the stations on the Acorn Network are connected together in the network by ordinary 4-wire cable. There is no specific direction of flow of data; the network simply ensures a path between any pair of stations. In practice these procedures give very efficient use of the Econet, with the minimum number of cables.
1. Before transmitting on the network a station listens until the network is free.
2. Two stations transmit simultaneously the "collision" is detected by a check of each station's Econet interface and both stations stop transmitting.
3. After a collision is detected, each station calculates the collision matrix and the station with the lowest value transmits first. The course of action taken is determined by a "collision arbitration" algorithm ensuring that no two stations go through the same sequence of actions.

ECONET'S ADVANTAGE OVER TETHERING
Each Acorn station costs less than a typical terminal on a timesharing system. Each station runs programs at maximum processor speed; extra stations don't slow the system down. Each station is independent; a fault on one station doesn't affect the others. The Econet is far more flexible than a timesharing system. Extra facilities can be added as self-contained units.
ECONET WITH OTHER ACORN SYSTEMS
Any Acorn Eurocard System or standard Acorn can be added. Compact hardware modules fit neatly inside the Acorn. ROM carries the software for low level network commands. Sophisticated file server/printer server software is available. At its lowest level the Econet can be linked to two Acorns only.

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won't be able to sustain the technology".

With video discs this is undoubtedly the case, re-runs of movies, the current staple diet for the US consumer market and the marketing approach planned in the UK, do not exploit the unique features and total audio-visual concept of the disc. Most commentators believe that business and education will be the key to the consumer video disc market and that this should be where the thrust is made.

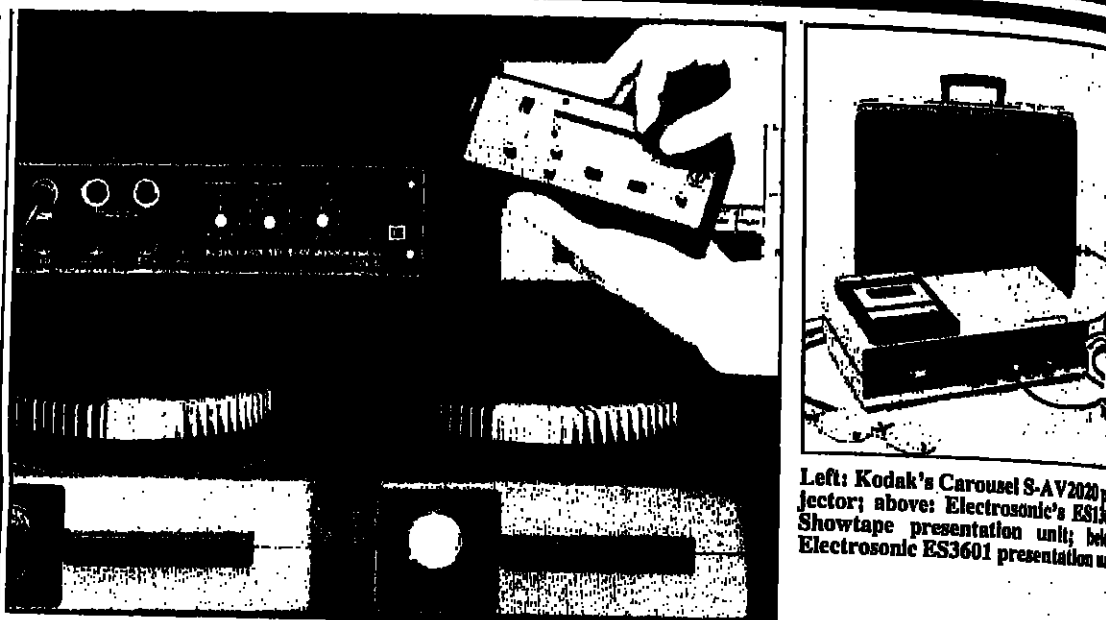
So how realistic is this expectation that education, hand in hand with industry will help stimulate or even ensure that video discs become a reality? Not surprisingly in these days of education cutbacks, the "education of delegates" was not much in evidence at the conference. But there was nevertheless a great deal of interest amongst participants, in the experimental work now being undertaken by the Videodisc Group of the University of Nebraska in the States. Set up four years ago with on-going funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the research team have been exploring the potential of videodisc technology and developing programming that exploits the range of functional capabilities of the system and particularly its ability to interface with computers to become a totally interactive instructional system.

Examples of programming at different levels of sophistication were demonstrated. "Kid Disc" aims to help develop a child's sensory motor skills through a series of games, with the coding embedded on the disc allowing a degree of interaction. A more comprehensive project uses an equipment package of video disc player, microprocessor and black box costing around \$5,000 and software on both video disc and floppy disc. The data on the video disc both still and moving images is controlled by the computer programme, and this was partially demon-

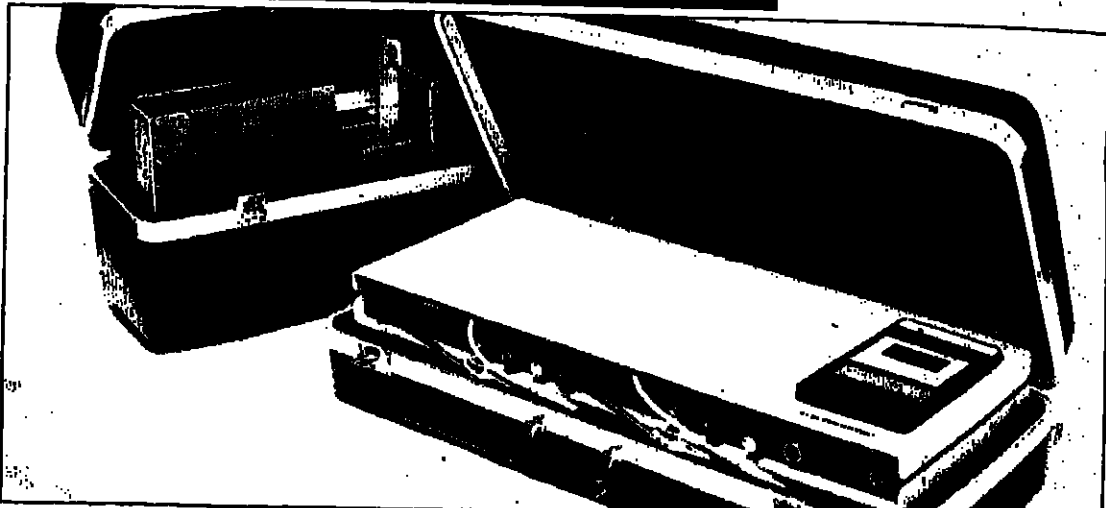
strated by means of a "Flight Training" programme which can take the student through a simulation of flight procedures which requires his active participation. The Group is developing a range of programming for both commerce and education, but costs are high at about \$50,000 a project, and one of the major unknown factors with this technology is just what the video disc pressing costs will be for low runs. The Group is moving increasingly towards client-sponsored work, but the fact that the CPB is interested in the video disc technology reveals just how closely video, satellites, cable and conventional broadcasting are becoming entwined.

The chances of an educationally orientated project such as the Nebraska one being mounted in the UK are slim, until such a time as it is known clear whether discs will take off. However, if Philips are so concerned not to lose credibility (many educationists will recall the VCR confusions), it is tempting to ask, as did some conference participants, whether having spent £75m on developing the system and with plans to spend £1.5m on promoting it in the Autumn, a substantial amount of money shouldn't be put into software development.

The Economist Video Conference certainly highlighted just how risky the video business is. There was a mix of optimism and pessimism about the ever increasing range of video distribution systems and their potential commercial and economic implications. The cultural, social and educational implications were, if not ignored, given a very secondary place. But surely if people are going to be able to assess where video is going, all these factors must be taken into consideration, for as one speaker said, "Beware the man who knows the answer before he's understood the question." The conference was at least a step in the right direction.



Left: Kodak's Carousel S-AV200 projector; above: Electrosonic's ES1600 Showtape presentation unit; below: Electrosonic ES3601 presentation unit.



Magic lantern principle

Bill Hicks on multivision

Magic lantern pioneers of the early 19th century were quick to learn the advantages of pointing two or even three projectors at one screen. By dimming the lamp in one, and simultaneously brightening the other, they were able to turn a jerky series of images into a continuous flow, much to the delight and astonishment of their pre-cinema audiences.

Exactly the same principle has been exploited, and vastly elaborated, by the practitioners of multivision, which grafts advanced electronic control onto the basic idea of tape-slide presentations. It is now commonplace, in the service of commerce, to link as many as 50 projectors with several screens and quadrophonic sound systems in an attempt to give as spectacular a possible audio-visual launch to the latest product. Despite the encroachment of video, multivision is still growing, favoured for its flexibility and big-screen impact, and it now supports a thriving specialist industry.

In essence, multivision depends on the control of just two functions of the projector: lamp brightness, and slide changing. These can be manipulated to provide an astonishing range of effects, from the basic "crossfade" of one image into the next, to multiple superimpositions and - by rapid flashing - a rudimentary form of animation.

In multivision, these are controlled automatically by impulses on a tape, but any teacher with access to two, preferably identical, automatic slide projectors can achieve most of the effects by manual control. Electrical dissolve units - such as the GAP Dissolve Control (about £40) - are widely available, and can be used with minimal modifications on most projectors. They link the lamp circuits of two projectors, enabling smooth fades of any duration to be made with a slider control. One model, the Imatronc 1000T, has twin sliders to give independent control of the lamps, enabling, for example, double-strength superimpositions on screen.

Dual-projection enthusiasts have found it easy to make their own dissolve units from readily available components, and have achieved similar results with mechanical shutter or triac-type devices placed in front of the projector lenses.

While the aesthetic gains offered by two projectors are obvious, the benefits to education may be less clear. Certainly, a commercial tape-slide programme which is dull on one projector will be only cosmetically improved by two, though this alone could make an important difference for children accustomed to the visual sophistication of TV.

The real potential can only be exploited by purpose-made programmes, and it is here, with the opportunities for creative participation of children, that the attractions for teachers are most clear. Whether using photography, or by drawing directly onto blank slides, they can experiment with colour mixing, superimposition, masking and titling techniques, and learn the basic disciplines of audio-visual narrative which apply equally to film and television.

Manual control is perfectly adequate for production and experimentation, but anyone who has struggled with the dissolve, slide-change and tape recorder controls will appreciate the advance of automation. For repeat presentations of the same finished programme, it is essential. As with tape-slide synchronisation, auto-dissolve is controlled by inaudible signals recorded on one track of a tape during production. On playback, these are fed through a demodulator to be used as instructions to the projectors.

Originally such electronic control was confined to professional equipment; more recently specialist manufacturers have responded to the demand for more modest, lower-priced versions. One such manufacturer is Electrosonic, a pioneer of multivision in the 1960s, who now provide a comprehensive family of micro-electronic control and presentation products. Built around the all-conquering Kodak Carousel projector, Electrosonic make two types of basic auto-dissolve unit for twin projectors: the ES 3601 (£125), which can be programmed to give precise, pre-set dissolve rates of between 2.5 and 12 seconds; and the ES 3609 which gives infinitely variable dissolve control. These can be used for both production and playback, but are without tape

decks or projectors. (The latest Carousel, incidentally, model S-AV 2030, costs about £250 without lens).

Perhaps more suitable for schools is the ES 3669 "Showtape" presentation unit, which is both rugged and compact, complete with tape deck, amplifier, loudspeaker and microphone.

Imatronc's SX 2500 dual projector auto dissolve unit has recently been complemented by the SX 2710 model for three projectors. Both models give infinitely variable programme rates, and can be used with a range of projectors and tape controls. The addition of a third projector is immensely to the smoothness of change sequences, and allows adventurous experimentation with superimpositions and animation; but the improvement in no way matches the quantum leap provided by the second. Beyond three projectors, unless multi-screen work is envisaged, the law of diminishing returns applies.

GAP has recently introduced a very low-cost complete twin projector unit called the "Electrofade" which, for around £300, provides two projectors, auto-dissolve unit, slides, handset to control with flash and pause buttons, and a carrying case, though not a tape deck.

A similar unit made by Patricola is distributed in the UK by Gordon Audio-Visual, while Kodak itself offers the S-AV Dissolve Control and remote control handset, a control-only device requiring the use of separate programmers and tape recorder. Professional multivision is now increasingly moving into the field of computerised control, and instead of being supplanted by video - as many had predicted - it is instead embracing the new medium as an addition to its repertoire. Advanced multivision units can readily control the functions of ancillary film projectors and video recorders if necessary. The demand for bigger and better audio-visual extravaganzas shows no signs of abating. It should not be forgotten, however, that multivision grew out of the large educational development of tape slides, and it is only right that education should now be able to exploit some of the techniques it has discovered.

Laser beams and rapid images

by David Kilpatrick

Last month Kodak announced their new range of Ektaprint dry copiers, something which will cause major manufacturers to take notice. Behind this important move there is something much deeper which will have an immediate effect on educational methods - the big photographic manufacturers, investigating ways of saving silver in films and printing papers, have discovered or devised a host of new and better ways of making images on film or paper.

At Haver's big office equipment show in April, Canon introduced a laser printer. The idea of firing a beam of burning light at the surface of paper and scorching the letters or graphics on to it is very simple. Such a printer can be "interfaced" to a range of other systems - a computer, text television, microfilm reader, copying machine, typewriter or typewriter, and so on. If you imagine a special kind of paper with a backing layer (black), red, cyan and magenta layers sandwiched, and a white surface, you have the basis for laser colour printing. Different colours are created, depending on how deep the beam burns.

The stumbling-block for schools and colleges has always been the high cost of materials needed to create good quality images, whether from diagrams, text or photographs. This is why the spirit duplicator and ink/skin printer remain universal in schools and are obsolete in industry and commerce: they are very cheap to run. The laser

Kodak have a new process called Ektaflex, available in the UK in 1982, which uses a sheet of printing film similar to Polaroid to produce top-quality colour prints in any darkroom from slides or negatives. By cutting out messy or longwinded processes and replacing them with a simple feed-through roller machine which squeezes two sheets of material together and soaks them in a single solution, colour prints cease to be something you need two or three spare hours continuously to tackle. You leave each print sandwich for about six minutes and then peel the two layers apart to get a 10 x 8" print. Again, this will be expensive.

There remain, of course, the simpler methods of getting instant slides or prints. Gordon Audio Visual's RIZO diazo printers are unexpensive compared to a thermal copier for OHP and duplicator skins - and the materials, too, cost only a few pence for each slide. The problem is that you have to start with a small original. Write-on slide film from Gordon AV has the same disadvantage; though it is easy to write on the translucent, matt white film in 35mm frames, few people can produce miniature lettering accurately.

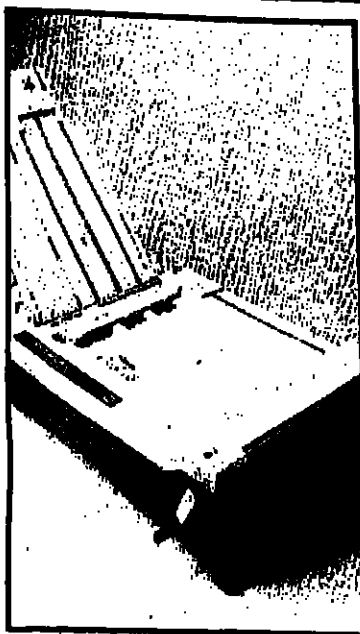
One neat answer is to put up with having to process a length of film and get better results for your effort. An excellent set-up now available is the Czechoslovakian Axomat 4 photo enlarger from Photax Ltd of Eastbourne, which is an excellent, unexpensive 35mm enlarger. An accessory is a 35mm film cassette which fits into the negative carrier slot. It can be loaded with Kodalith Ortho Type 3 film to make reduced 35mm slides from pages up to A4 covered even in very fine type.

You need in addition to the enlarger and cassette two clip-on photo-flood lamps (again from Photax) which to be copied must be positioned at 45 degree on either side of the original. To focus, you first project a sharp negative on to the original; this ensures that the reverse applies. The outline of the 35mm frame is adjusted by this projection method to cover all the area you want to copy. The exposure is made, the film cassette taken into the darkroom with red safelight, and lith developer (Kodak D19 Super Liquid or May and Baker Novifin) used to process it, followed by fixing, washing and drying.

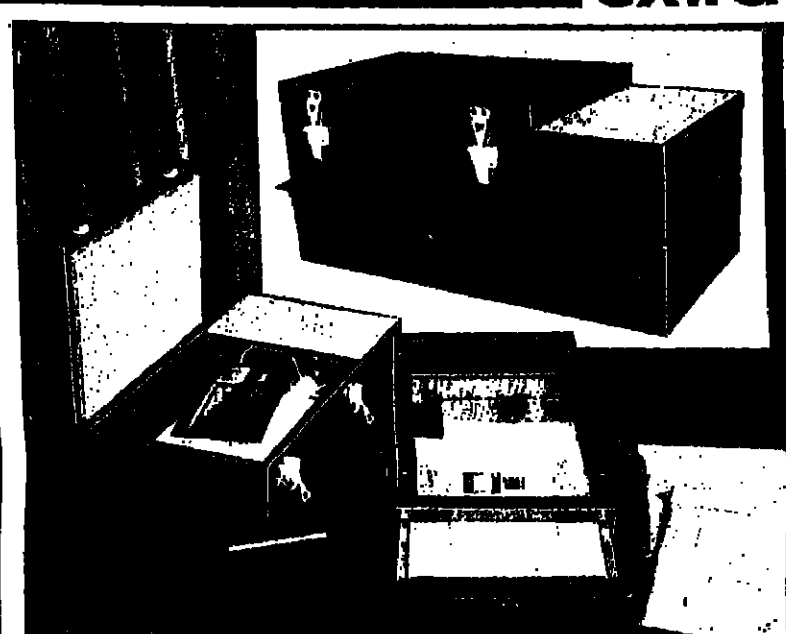
The slide (given correct exposure by trial and error and making a record of times needed for reference) has white text on solid black. You can add colour to the text or diagrams by wiping a coloured felt tip pen over the slide. A waterproof OHP marker works best. Other materials to experiment with if you have a darkroom include Kodak's SO 165 direct copy film. With simple processing in any bromide print developer, this very slow material makes a black and white directly from the original (or from a scene, but who wants a ten second exposure in sunlight?). Their Transtar TPP5 is a black and white bromide paper which can make direct reversal prints from slides, again by development in normal bromide paper chemicals. It is available in boxes of 100 A4 sheets.

Agfa-Gevaert's Copytone system makes direct black and white prints from life using any suitable 3 x 4 camera and a small processor, but the cost of running a 5 x 4 camera is high. Every school with photography on the curriculum should try to obtain an old 5 x 4 view camera to explain more clearly how camera works, and Copytone (or TPP5 with experiment) could be ideal for turning the image seen on the screen into a recognisable picture in a few minutes.

It is worth remembering that photo shops do not stock and can not show you these materials. They are found in the commercial, graphic arts and educational sections of the manufacturers' catalogues. A dealer might be able to order for you. The three main manufacturers of interesting graphic arts and imaging materials - Kodak, Agfa-Gevaert and 3M - all have sales departments fully prepared to visit



Left the Ektaflex printmaker; right the GCIVA2 diazo printer and processor.



schools and discuss ideas. Polaroid have not traditionally been a supplier of this kind, but may become one in future, so we have included their address as well at the end of the article.

Finally, an idea for a simple project, on the lines of the instant colour picture printer mentioned above. Polaroid recently introduced a new type of back for studio cameras. This only affects professional photographers and users of Polaroid microscope or oscilloscope cameras, but it means that there will be a good many of the older backs available very cheaply as professionals change to the much better new one.

Agfa-Gevaert Ltd, 27 Great West Road, Brentford, Middlesex.

Kodak Ltd, PO Box 66, Kodak House, Station Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 1JU.

Polaroid UK Ltd, Ashley Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 5PR.

3M United Kingdom Ltd, Photographic Products Group, 3M House,

perment with neutral density (grey) filters, close-up (dioptic) lenses and colour filters (acetate or gelatin) to reach a stage where you can put a slide in the projector, switch it on for two or three seconds, and end up with an instant Polaroid colour print. Hanime have already designed a projector with a built-in printer like this (more elegant) but the construction is well within the scope of your crafts/woodwork/metalwork/physics departments.

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Polaroid UK Ltd, Ashley Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 5PR.

3M United Kingdom Ltd, Photographic Products Group, 3M House,

PO Box 1, Bracknell, Berks RG12 1JU.

The Projectina Co Ltd, Skelmarlie, Ayrshire PA17 5BR. (Panacopy KV3030 camera)

Gordon Audio Visual Ltd, 28/30 Market Place, Oxford Circus, London W1N 8PH.

NB: Copyright: following the recent successful prosecution of a school for duplicating copyright music, it is worth noting that the same laws apply to textbooks, maps, project packs, photographs, slides, audio-visual filmstrips and all other commercially produced material. The equipment above is suggested for copying original work produced within and by staff or pupils and not for reproduction of other, copyright, resources material, except when allowed by the owners of the copyright.

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Leaflets giving information on the above series can be obtained by writing to:
**Nelson Audio-Visual,
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FILM



LIBRARY

From SEPTEMBER 1981 ICI will cease to distribute 16mm films on free loan to schools. Instead video-cassettes will be on sale at a sponsored price.

Existing used 16mm film library prints will be offered for sale to teachers at a fixed price of £15.

For full details of future arrangements write to:

**Argus Film Library Ltd.
15 Beaconsfield Road,
London NW10 2LE.**

